BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

ŚRI SANKARA'S TEACHINGS IN HIS OWN WORDS

BY
SWAMI ATMANANDA

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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay—needed a Book University, a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulsions of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books, 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once. Each book was to contain from 200 to 250 pages and was to be priced at Rs. 2.50.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English, but also in the following Indian languages: Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

This scheme, involving the publication of 900 volumes, requires ample funds and an all-India organisation. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are the reintegration of the Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit:

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions which would allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his own temperament and capacities; we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations, not in any makeshift way, but within the frame-work of the Moral Order; we seek the creative art of life, by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspiration which such books can teach.

In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily accessible to all.

Books in other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, as also the movements of the mind in India, which, though they flow through different linguistic channels, have a common urge and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Book University's first venture is the **Mahabharata**, summarised by one of the greatest living Indians, C. Rajagopalachari; the second work is on a section of it, the **Gita**, by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and a student of philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed of the **Mahabharata**: "What is not in it, is nowhere." After twenty-five centuries, we can use the same words about it. He who knows it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul; he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The **Mahabharata** is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life, a philosophy of social and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the **Gita** which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas in which the climax is reached in the wondrous Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

Through such books alone the harmonies underlying true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the disorders of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

1, Queen Victoria Road,
New Delhi:
3rd October, 1951

K. M. MUNSHI

Dedicated

To

My Guru

SWAMI RAMDAS

Anand Asram (Kanhangad)

Cannanore District, Kerala, India

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प्रस्तावना

शंकर विचार समझाने की अनेकों ने कोशिश की है । कइयों ने अपने शब्दों में कइयों ने शंकर के ही शब्दों में । स्वामी आत्मानन्दजी की यह छोटी-सी किताब दूसरे प्रकार में पड़ती है । पर उसका अपना एक अलग ढंग है । इसमें ग्रंथकार ने भाष्यकार शंकर को सूत्रकार बना लिया है । शंकर यद्यपि भाष्यकार है, व्यर्थ विस्तार कहीं नहीं करतें । अल्पतम शब्दों में भाष्य करते है । उसमें भी वे पहले अपना आशय, एकाध सूत्रमय वाक्य में लिख देते है । और फिर उसी का थोडा विवरण करते हैं, शंकर के ऐसे कुछ सूत्रमय वाक्य पकडने की, इसमें ग्रंथकार ने कोशिश की है ।

मैंने यह पुस्तक बारीकी से देखी नहीं है, उसका ढांचा देख गया हूँ । और मेरी ही सूचना पर ग्रंथकार ने उपासना-विषयक सूत्र बढ़ा दिये हैं । अन्यथा ९'१–२० सूत्रों में ही उपासना-प्रकरण समाप्त होता था । मुझे लगा उससे शंकर को अन्याय होता है । ग्रंथकार को यह मेरी सूचना जँच गयी, और वह प्रकरण नये सिरे से लिखा गया । पर मुझे भय है, कुछ जल्दबाजी के कारण उसमें शायद उतनी सुबद्धता न आ पायी हो ।

३२० सूत्रों में कुल विषय लाया गया है । शंकर के महासागरवत् ज्ञान को इस तरह एक छोटे चषक में भर देना सहज बात नहीं । और न ग्रंथकार भी वैसा कोई दावा करता है । दिशामात्र सुझाने का उद्देश्य है, और उसी दृष्टि से पाठकगण उसे ग्रहण करेंगे ऐसी, मैं आशा करता हूँ ।

नीलेश्वर
१६–८–५७

FOREWORD

Many have tried to interpret Sankara-Vichar (the Philosophy of Sankara), some doing so in their own words, while others in those of Sankara himself. This small book of Swami Atmanandaji falls in the second category, though it has its own style, which has presented Sankara the commentator as Sankara the aphorist.* Although a commentator, Sankara is never elaborate without purpose. His notes are the briefest. He gives the purport, in the beginning, in an aphorism-like sentence and elaborates and elucidates the same later. The author has herein tried to pick out some of the aphoristic sentences.

I have not gone through the book critically, but have seen the scheme adopted. It was at my instance that the author added some more Sutras to his original chapter on Upasana which otherwise would have been concluded in fifteen to twenty Sutras.* That would, I felt, do injustice to Sankara. The author who appreciated the suggestion wrote out the chapter anew. I am afraid, however, that due to haste, it might not have become so well-knit.

The whole subject has been summed up within three hundred and twenty Sutras. It is no easy task to confine the ocean-like wisdom of Sankara in a bottle, nor is that the author's claim. Only the salient points are meant to be indicated here. I hope the reader will approach the book from this viewpoint.

With pranams, VINOBA

Nileshwar (Kerala)

16-8-1957.

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* Sutra = Aphorism = the statement of the core of a topic in the most terse form.

PREFACE

During my youth, even before I had read any of the works of Sri Sankara, I was attracted to this fascinating personality who bestrode the intellectual and religious world of his day like a Colossus. A relation of mine whom I used to visit often was a keen student of the Gita and he invited me to read with him Sankara's commentaries on the Gita, which was a daily item in his Parayana. I was spellbound by Sankara's illuminating comments.

Later in 1935, I happened to read the translation of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad by Swami Madhavananda. Some of the thoughts of Sankara seemed so much at variance with current religious beliefs and so much in harmony with modern scientific trends that I decided to compare the translation with the original. The result was amazing. As I could not afford to own either the English translation or the Sanskrit original, I copied out the striking passages in a note book. I used to pore over the passages as often as possible and they were alike an inspiration and a solace to me.

In 1939 I was a guest of Swami Sivananda in his Asram at Rishikesh and in that sacred and congenial atmosphere I read that magnificent work, Sankara's Sutra Bhashya. Here again, I copied out the stirring passages. These inspiring quotations were with me when I came to Bombay to attend the historic "Quit India" session of the All India Congress Committee in August 1942 and they sustained me in jail in which I was detained after my return to Trichur. The quiet life of the solitary cell in jail gave me an opportunity to arrange the passages subjectwise.

Many friends to whom I used to read out the passages suggested that they should be printed. I should particularly mention Shri P.M.N. Swamy of the Ramana Samaj, Bombay,

who suggested that I should add an introduction as well as notes. Swami Krishnananda of Anand Asram, Kanhangad, North Kerala, went through the manuscript and was kind enough to make several suggestions. I am grateful to Shri R. V. Aiyar of Trichur who typed the entire manuscript as a labour of love.

Acharya Vinobaji, the pioneer of Gramdan and a great scholar of Sri Sankara's works, was kind enough to go through the manuscript and express his appreciation. At his instance, I expanded the chapter on Upasana. I cannot express adequately my heartfelt thanks to him for writing at my request a Foreword to the book.

Shri K. M. Munshi suggested the addition of a chapter on the life and achievements of Sankara. I have done so and I am sure it will enhance the value of the book. I am deeply grateful to Kulapati Munshiji for the great interest he has evinced in the publication of this book.

I am beholden to Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar for the characteristically thought-provoking introduction he has written. His comparison of Sankara with Western thinkers will make this book easier for western readers to comprehend. I record my abiding gratitude to Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar for his kindness.

I am grateful to Shri Munshiji and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan for having readily agreed to publish the book under their popular 'Book University Series' and for the excellent production values.

If my book encourages people to understand Sankara's teachings and provokes in them a desire for further study of this great saint and savant, I shall feel amply rewarded.

Ramana Jayanti Day:
Bombay, 6-1-1958.

Swami Atmananda

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Since the attainment of independence by India there are seen signs of a religious revival in the country. The advent of the Atom Bomb and the destruction it forebodes to the much-vaunted Western civilization has caused a depression in the Western mind. It is engaged in an anxious search for a way out. This may be taken as a prelude to a religious dawn in the West also. So it would be of great value to India and the West to understand a great master mind on religion to show them a new path of religious thought and practice in conformity with the times. Right comprehension is the father of right practice.

Possessed as I was with this great idea, I had a great desire that Sankara's teachings should be made available to the people at this moment. By God's grace, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan kindly undertook to publish my book and brought it out in November 1958. The fact that the first edition was exhausted in a few months only serves to confirm my idea that the thinking religious world did feel the necessity for such a book.

Sankara's genius is many-sided; so also are his works. As stated by Shri Vinobaji it is not an easy task to confine the ocean-like wisdom of Sankara within the compass of a small book. But my aim is but a limited one; the aim of this book is only to present his ideas on the various phases of religious evolution. His ideas on religion are not local and topical but universal and for all times! So his assessment of the various phases of religious evolution, it is hoped, will be of great value and use to the modern aspirants in the practice of religion. Perhaps Shri Vinobaji's book on Sankara's "Guru Bodh" published in May 1957 is more comprehensive in outlook.

I have taken the opportunity of a second edition to try to improve the book in the light of certain criticisms about it. I have entirely recast the introduction to the first chapter to make the subject matter more lucid. This chapter has been re-named "The Vedas" (Scriptures) to indicate clearly what Sankara's contributions are for a right evaluation of the scriptures.

There are many questions about the necessity and validity of the Scriptures. The new introduction supplies a reply to these and shows how the Scriptures throw light on a sphere of mind not still fully explored by Science. It is perhaps more necessary to know about the limitations and weaknesses of the Scriptures to appreciate them properly. It may be stated here that Sankara has very valuable observations to make on both these aspects of the Scriptures. Though these are made in reference to the Vedas, they are equally applicable to all the Scriptures of the world. That is why the more general name "SCRIPTURES" has been adopted for this chapter. Two new sections on Arthavada, and Itihasa and Puranas have been added.

A new section has been inserted in the introduction to the second chapter under the heading "Why the topic of Nityakarmas now-a-days?" The Vedic Nityakarmas, typified by Agnihotra and confined to the Brahmins in the old days, have now gone out of use. But a lot has been said in the book about Sankara's views on Nityakarma. Is this necessary? Yes. Even to-day people in every section of society and in every religious group are firm believers that certain ceremonies have to be regularly gone through. Their attitude to these ceremonies is not unlike that of Jaimini's; for Jaimini's mind is typical of a large class of religious people who believe that with the meticulous performance of certain ceremonies, the religious practices are exhausted and that there is nothing more to do in religion.

At best it may be said of these people that they do not know about the higher phases in the evolution of religion. It will be good for them to know what Sankara's views are on their attitude and practices. Sankara throws a flood of light on the limited value of ceremonies by his remarks on Nityakarma.

The sayings of Sankara on Mantra Japa and Varna Dharma added at the end of Chapter IV may be of interest to the curious layman.

This book is not intended merely for scholars, but for a wide circle of general readers who have at least a bias towards religion or have the curiosity to know what the great Sankara's teachings are.

Sankara's status in the religious and philosophical world is similar to that of Einstein in the world of Science. How many can take easily to a popular expósition of the principles of Relativity and understand it without some scientific background? Not even so much of background about religious ideas is expected of the general reader here, as every one is vitally interested in questions of his happiness and is making some endeavour to come by it. In this book is depicted the way to that happiness. The book also gives a proper assessment by Sankara of the various stages on the way to the goal.

Various topics are taken up in each of the chapters. The points of each topic have been emphasised and hammered in by an array of quotations bearing on it. This repetition may prove very annoying to some readers. To such, whose curiosity is only intellectual and as such cannot stand this repetition, is suggested the reading of the introductions to each chapter and the reading of one or two sayings on each topic. The long notes in the body of the book may also prove instructive.

It may be added that the purpose of emphasis by repeated quotations is to point out that any observation of Sankara is not quite casual but deliberate and sustained. Further, some sayings bring out subtle aspects not dealt with in others. This work will prove especially useful to those who want to have very clear ideas in their practice of higher religion by Japa and meditation.

Shri Vinobaji gave his foreword in Hindi and it was to have been published in the original as well as in translation but the Hindi original somehow came to be omitted. This as well as an appendix, glossary and index, omitted in the first edition, have been added here.

Ananda Ashram,
February 20, 1959.

SWAMI ATMANANDA

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

It is very gratifying to note that this book is to have a third edition. It means that many people are interested to understand the great Sankara's teachings on Religion and Sadhana. Besides correcting some minor errors that had crept into the last edition, I have taken this opportunity to add two more chapters to this book to ensure an easier and fuller treatment of his teachings.

The chapter on Fundamental Propositions of Sankara should in fact be the introductory chapter. It is intended to facilitate the study of the present first four chapters of the book which contain nearly four hundred quotations from Sankara's Works. The coherency running through these may not be seen. By having a volume of quotations, I fear, one may be losing the wood in the midst of the trees. It is necessary to have an outline of the essentials of his teachings before a detailed study is taken up. The core of his teachings should be understood in a nut-shell. This is what is being attempted in this chapter. Owing to the exigencies of printing this has become the fifth chapter. I would advise the readers to read this chapter first before taking up other chapters.

It may be a problem with many, how Sankara's propositions are to be reconciled with other important Darsaṇas (philosophical systems). Sankara's reactions towards other systems are recorded in the sixth chapter. Sankara's main aim was Samyak Darsana (correct realisation of Truth). He has measured other systems from this standpoint. He has gladly accepted from other systems views consistent with Truth. But without losing his deference to the other great Acharyas, he has not hesitated to point out and reject what he regarded in them as violations of Truth, and went against express and indubitable pronouncement of the Upanishads.

Thus his own presentations, supplemented by what has been accepted by him from the other systems, will furnish an integral and consistent view of the Spiritual Philosophy of India.

Only spiritual values can contribute to correct conduct in life. Even the applications of the magnificent development in science and technology have to submit themselves for an evaluation by Spirituality, only then will true Happiness ensue in this world.

It is hoped these additions will enhance the value of the book.

ATMANANDA

Jnana Ashram,
Vadakancheri-Cochin,
Trichur District,
Kerala State.
3-7-1963.

PREFACE

(By Dr. C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar)

Jagadguru Adi Sankaracharya was almost unique in the history of thought as he combined in himself the attributes of a poet, a logician, a devotee and a mystic as well as being the architect of the monistic system of philosophy that bears his name. He was an inspired 'Kavi' whose appeal was, in turn, to every human feeling and sentiment. His descriptions of nature and his appraisal of human and divine personality reached the summits of art, and his command over the 'Navarasas' (नवरस) was superb.

At the same time, in his commentaries on the 'Prasthanatraya' (प्रस्थानत्रय) he displayed a rare faculty of relentlessly logical and concatenated argument and refutation and such subtlety of reasoning as has not been surpassed in the philosophical writings of the world. He vindicated and firmly established the 'Advaita philosophy,' which has been described to be one of the supreme achievements of Hinduism. He was, simultaneously, the author of some of the sweetest lyrics like 'Soundarya Lahari' devoted to the adoration of a personal Godhead in several manifestations. Within the short compass of 30 and odd years, he travelled throughout India and demonstrated his marvellous organising capacity by the establishment of Mutts in all the four quarters devoted to the continuation of the doctrines he had expounded in his life, by sanyasins, who were to demonstrate in their dedicated lives the efficacy and the practicableness of such teachings.

If one can presume to summarise the main features of his philosophy contained, as they are, in the commentaries on the 'Gita,' the 'Upanishads' and 'Brahma Sutra' and in such condensed expositions as 'Viveka Chudamani,' 'Atmabodha,' 'Satasloki,' 'Prabodhasudhakara,' 'Aparokshanubhuti' and that unequalled compendium of wisdom, the 'Dakshinamurti Stotra,' they consist in the affirmation of 'Samsara' or the succession of

births and deaths conditioned by 'Karma' and its cosmic significance and the realisation of the essential relativity of phenomena in the context of the reality of the 'Supreme Self,' the realisation of that 'Self' not being of a theoretical matter, but in the nature of a direct realisation and actual experience summarised in the saying 'Tatvamasi' (तत्त्वमसि). In his own language,

" यस्यैव स्फुरणं सदात्मकमसत्कल्पार्थगं भासते. "

Even amongst Indians, there is considerable misapprehension in relation to the real import of Sankara's 'Advaita.' He asserts that the eternal, impersonal 'Brahman' (ब्रह्मन्) is the only ultimate reality. He explains the phenomena of the Universe as due to the power called 'Maya' (माया) by which that absolute, without undergoing any change in or by itself, appears to us as an everchanging succession of phenomena conditioned by time and space. He postulates that the spirit of man is identical with the 'Supreme spirit' and that our sufferings and errors are due to the failure to realise this identity and he further declares that this realisation can procure liberation. One of his chief doctrines is that 'Karma' (work) and 'Upasana' (उपासना —worship) are ancillary to 'Jnana' (ज्ञान) or illumination.

Owing to 'Avidya' (अविद्या) according to him, we see diversity where there is unity and many where there is one. Sankara is remarkable for his insistence on knowledge by investigation and not by the mere acceptance of assertions by others.

" न विद्यते विना ज्ञानं विचारेणान्यसाधनैः "

Sankara did not teach that the world was unreal or a figment. On the other hand, he was at pains to point out that such an idea of unreality was a part of the Buddhist (Yogachara) doctrine.

It is not well known that in the 'Padma Purana' there is a frontal attack on Sankara and his doctrines and the description प्रच्छन्नबौद्ध or 'Crypto Buddhist' was applied to Sankara in a passage wherein the Lord Siva is supposed to have declared to

the Devi that the theory of 'Maya' (माया) is a false doctrine, being a disguised form of Buddhism. Lord Siva adds, "I have myself propounded it in the Kaliyuga taking the form of a Brahmin."

" मयैव कथितं देवि कलौ ब्राह्मणरूपिणा "

This 'Purana' is supposed to stand second in the list of Puranas and in its later sections is strongly Vaishnavite, Siva being supposed to explain to Parvati, the nature and attributes of Vishnu, whom, they both join in adoring. In its present form the 'Padma Purana' is attributed to the 12th century and it reveals a very common misconception regarding both Sankara and Lord Buddha, the critics forgetting that both the great seers openly took their ideas from the early 'Upanishads,' though they developed their theses differently. The main background of the Sankara system is the 'Mandukyopanishad' on which Sankara has composed his well-known commentary. The second verse of that Upanishad runs as follows:—

" सर्वं ह्येतत् ब्रह्म अयमात्मा ब्रह्म सोऽयमात्मा "

The only common feature between Buddha and Sankara may be pronounced to be the freedom of both from narrow theological obsessions.

Sankara's conception of the Absolute is not solely a matter of intellectual subtlety. He assumes that the relation of the 'Brahman' with the world is 'Anirvachaneeya' (अनिर्वचनीय)— impossible of explanation. 'Brahman' is attributeless and immutable. 'Isvara' himself, in a sense, is a product of 'Maya' (माया) being the highest approach to the 'Nirguna Brahman' (निर्गुणब्रह्मन्) possible to the individual soul. The world is an apparent transformation through 'Maya' (माया) of the 'Nirguna Brahman (निर्गुणब्रह्मन्), 'Jiva' (जीव) being, in reality, also all-pervading and identical with 'Brahman'. When the 'Jiva' (जीव) is individualised by what are called its 'Upadhis' (उपाधि) accessories or adjuncts, the 'Jiva' (जीव) regards itself as a doer or an agent.

Sankara in his 'Satasloki' (शतश्लोकी) thus expounds the idea:

जीवात्मब्रह्मभेदं दलयति सहसा यत् प्रकाशैकरूपं
माया तेनैव तस्य क्षयमुपगमिता संसृतेः कारणं या

As to 'Maya' (माया) referred to above, Sankara's argument is somewhat as follows:—"Man's senses may deceive him; his memory may play him false; the forms of the world may be a matter of delusion; the objects of knowledge or perception may be doubted; but the doubter himself cannot be doubted." This position leads to the conclusion that the 'Self' which is composed of the elements of 'Sachchidananda' (सच्चिदानन्द) being Consciousness and bliss is universal and infinite, whereas the world of objects is subject to mutation. In other words, the world, as perceived, is as real as the perceiver. In saying this, Sankara differs, as already stated, from the 'Yogachara' tenets of Buddhism.

The world, according to Sankara, is neither non-existing nor void. Its attributes are neither अभाव nor शून्य. But, granted all this, the world is not ultimate reality and our confusion arises, because we do not differentiate between the basic 'Atman' (आत्मन्) and the empirical 'Anatman' (अनात्मन्). 'Moksha' (मोक्ष) arises, when the truth is realised. It is not 'Nirvana' (निर्वाण) in the sense of dissolution, but the replacement of a false outlook 'Avidya' (अविद्या) by the true outlook 'Vidya (विद्या). In the 'Viveka Chudamani,' Sankara says, "Deliverance is not achieved by repeating the word 'Brahman' but by directly experiencing 'Brahman.'"

Having proceeded so far, Sankara then expounds the view that निराकार (absolute) becomes आकारवत् (embodied) for the individual worshipper as a personal or 'Saguna' (सगुण) God, which is the only form in which the absolute can be comprehended by the finite mind. The religion of a personal God is

not a mere dogma, but is a product of realisation and experience. As the end of religion is साक्षात्कार (realisation), what is termed 'Bhakti' is striving for this साक्षात्कार or realisation by means of a personal God or symbol प्रतीक, which may be an image, a painting or other object in nature. It will thus be seen that Sankara does not exclude or expel the frame-work of the external world. This is an aspect, which is not always understood by those who comment on the 'Vedanta' system.

The truth of 'Brahman' may be mentally or intellectually envisaged. But, in spite of such attempts, there is a deep-rooted desire for personal separateness, which is the true 'Avidya' (अविद्या) and the true play of 'Maya' (माया). It creates the notion, "I am the actor; I am the one who experience." This notion is the cause of bondage to conditional existence—birth and death, and this notion can be eradicated only by a strenelous endeavour to live in union with the 'Brahman'. Such eradication is called 'Moksha' (मोक्ष). One of the boldest steps taken by Sankara is the pronouncement that when a man follows the ways of the world, or even the way of tradition (i.e. when he believes in religious rites and the letter of the scriptures), he cannot attain the knowledge of reality, which does not arise until and unless by some path he attains the citadel of ज्ञान (illumination).

It may be observed that similar conceptions and thoughts have occurred to men and women in many other countries and in other ages. St. Catherine of Genoa exclaims, "My 'me' is God, nor do I recognise any other 'me' except God himself" and the Sufi saint Bayazid stated, "I went from 'God' to 'God' until they cried from 'me' in 'me'. Oh thou I!" When some one knocked at the saint's door and asked, "Is Bayazid here?" his answer was, "Is anybody here except God?"

In that remarkable compilation of Aldous Huxley entitled "Perennial Philosophy" occurs the following passage elucidating the maxims—"That art 'thou'. Behold but one in all things,

God within and God without." There is a way to reality in and through the world and there is a way to reality in and through the soul. But the best way is that which leads to the "Divine ground simultaneously in the perceiver and in that which is perceived."

The medieval philosopher, Ruysbroeck, has stated, "The image of God is found essentially and personally in all mankind. In this way we are all one, intimately united in our external image, which is the image of God and the source in us of all our life."

Perhaps, however, one of the nearest approximations to Sankara was manifested in Spinoza. According to him, the totality of all existing things is God (God or nature—'Dens sine nature'). God is not a cause outside of things, which passes over into things and works upon things from without. He is **immanent,** dwelling within, working from within, penetrating and impregnating all things. In his "Short treatise" he utters the truth as revealed to him. "Nature consists of infinite attributes. To its essence pertains existence. It thus coincides exactly with the essence of God."

What may be called the "Sankara system" has thus pervaded and influenced not only all aspects of Indian thought, but has had significant repercussions amongst medieval Christian saints, Sufi divines and more recent thinkers like Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. There is, further more, a growing body of scientific thinkers who, confronted by the phenomena and developments of nuclear, atomic and cosmic theories, feel irresistibly drawn to Sankara's enunciations as the most legitimate and satisfactory explanation of the Universe, physical, psychological and parapsychological.

The more one studies the teachings of Sankara and his source books, the 'Upanishads,' the 'Brahma Sutra' and the 'Gita,' the more one is struck by the intuitory anticipation by past seers of what are now coming to be regarded as scientific

truths. The atomic theory and the existence of a reservoir of incalculable energy in the atoms, the doctrine of conservation of energy and many of the developments of physics, chemistry and biology, regarding the potentialities of the infinitesimally small and the infinitely great, all of them being demonstrated as evolutionary products and transmutations of primal energy, are envisaged in the doctrines of 'Anu' (अणु) or atom, of 'Anna' (अन्न) (wrongly identified in many passages with food) and 'Sabda Brahman' (शब्द ब्रह्मन). the 'Brahman' as manifested severally as vibrations, sound and energy and 'Sakti' (शक्ति).

In 1956 there was published a book entitled "The outlines of Modern Knowledge," to which contributions have been made by the most eminent scientists of today. In an article by Dr. Rhine on "Para Psychology" contributed to this volume, he says, "Why should we suppose that there could be no kind of energy beyond those that are known; why should it be assumed that all the energies of nature should be subject to time and space and mass relationship and perceptible to the sensory organs of man?" Again, some of the conclusions reached by astronomers and physicists that have culminated in the works of Einstein, Heisenberg, and Niels Bohr and the Curies and men like Sir James Jeans, seem like excerpts from Sankara's exposition of the 'Relativity of Knowledge' and the illusoriness of sensation and experience.

Incidentally, it may be observed that the saying, " यदिदं किञ्च जगत्सर्वं प्राण एजति निःसृतम् " taken in conjunction with the 'Brahma Sutra' aphorism 'कंपनात्' is the assertion that प्राण or life is a continuous vibration or manifestation of energy operating in the 'Brahman,' the circumambient or the 'Supreme Self'.

I have been at some pains to deal with the universality as well as the scientific topicality of Sankara because, in the main, Swami Atmananda has sought, in his very erudite book on "Sri Sankara's Teachings in His Own Words," to develop similar aspects of his works and illustrate the validity of his teachings.

What Shri Vinoba Bhave calls, 'Sankara Vichara,' or the philosophy of Sankara, has been expounded in Sankara's own words by the Swamiji and he has evidently had the benefit of valuable consultations with Shri Vinoba Bhave.

The object of the treatise is avowedly to introduce the reader to the fundamental aspects of Sri Sankara's teachings. The author observes with justice that the method adopted by Sankara is parallel to the method adopted in Geometry.

The Swami sets out, in Part I, in Sutra form the main thoughts of Sankara and proceeds thereafter to give more elaborate explanations. He claims that the presentation of these propositions would help a reader to get a hold on the fundamentals of the philosophy. He deals with the subject under four major heads वेद; कर्म; उपासना and ज्ञाननिष्ठा.

There is a succinct and useful account of Sankara's life, the details of which are well-known. He draws pointed attention to the Chandala incident in Varanasi in (मनीषापञ्चकम्).

" ब्रह्मैवाहमिदं जगच्च सकलं चिन्मात्रविस्तारितं
सर्वं चैतदविद्यया त्रिगुणयाऽशेषं मया कल्पितम् ।
इत्थं यस्य दृढा मतिः सुखतरे नित्ये परे निर्मले
चाण्डालोऽस्तु स तु द्विजोऽस्तु गुरुरित्येषा मनीषा मम ॥ "

The few verses of this poem contain the essence of Vedantic teaching and an enunciation of the ultimate unity of the Universe that must lead to tolerance and infinite comprehension.

He deals also with Sankara's travel to Assam, one of the pristine homes of the "Tantra" (तन्त्र) cult. Pointing out that 'Sankara lived in a period of great spiritual crisis,' the author declares that the work done by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda, in the face of modern materialism, was combined in the life history of Sankara, who, in the language of the Swamiji, "was an adept in the process of synthesis as in analysis." Sankara sought to uphold the verities of the

'Gita', 'Brahma Sutra' and the 'Upanishads' by his own commentaries and his attitude towards 'Poorva Mimamsa' and towards 'Mandana Misra' are well brought out by the author and the passages dealing with Sankara's outlook on 'Karma' are illuminating. He rightly points out that the Buddhist approach, not being based on tradition and being essentially academic, ceased to retain the allegiance of the people in India. Sankara flourished at a time when the Vedic rites and ceremonies had lost their original importance and appropriateness and when temple worship had become universal.

The special glory of Sankara is that, over and above being the protagonist of monistic approach, he is the author of innumerable Stotras as already stated. As the author observes, the 'Jnana' (ज्ञान) of Sankara is not a cold study of books, but a warm-hearted striving to realise the truth, which, when turned towards a personal deity, becomes 'Bhakti.'

The Swami also endeavours to show that Sankara, while accepting the 'Mimamsa' rules of interpretation, regarded the 'Vedas' as explanatory or as revealing the truths but not as 'Karaka' (कारक) or mandatory. Illustrating his remarks by reference to Sankara's 'Bhashya' (भाष्य) on 'Brahma Sutra' and the 'Upanishads' he shows that, according to Sankara, the test of the authority of a passage is its capacity to generate fruitful knowledge.

The passages relating to the validity of 'Vedic' dicta and Sankara's controversy with Kapila are also valuable, though recondite.

Chapter II on the 'Karma' or 'Pravritti Marga' (प्रवृत्तिमार्ग) treads familiar ground. But, the portion relating to 'Upasana' (उपासना) and devoted to mental concentration or 'Chittaikagrya' (चित्तैकाग्र्य) is specially valuable.

Sankara is as insistent as Buddha on the supreme importance of lofty ethics as one of the fundamentals of spiritual life,

but his outlook on 'Karma,' on temple worship and on domestic ceremonial is sympathetic and harmonious and not merely destructive. Students of Hindu Philosophy will be indebted to the author for the immense trouble he has taken to collate the main axioms of Sankara's teachings linking them by his expository remarks. This volume is veritably a labour of erudition and of love.

28-11-1957 **C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar.**

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In the following pages are given typical sayings of Sankara in original with their translation in English with notes where necessary. The sayings have been culled from his commentaries on the Prasthana Traya (the Upanishads, Gita and Brahma Sutras) and arranged under various topics. An attempt has been made to follow the psychological sequence.

The aim of Part I (this book) is to introduce the reader to the fundamental aspects of Sankara's teachings in their easiest form, so as to make him comprehend Hinduism in its purest and simplest form. But, in fact, Sankara is so general in his statements that his teachings will profit the followers of all religions equally.

The method adopted by Sankara in establishing the great propositions of religion is almost parallel to that adopted in Geometry. He opens any discussion by stating his proposition first, in the most pithy yet precise form. Using a Sanskrit word, we may state that he states his case tersely as if in a "Sutra." Then arguments against and for are adduced elaborately, with a wealth of detail and rigorous reasoning. No aspect of the question is left out. Cutting his way straight and sharp through the maze, the propositions are proved to the hilt and established. This portion of the argument forms the elaborate explanation of the initial terse statement or Sutra. Part I contains some of the most important "Sutras" of Sankara with a view to introducing him to the lay reader. The elaborate explanations are not given here as they will interest only the few serious readers who would like to go into these propositions more fully. They may find their satisfaction in Part II, which it is hoped to publish later.

Sankara has to be known in India itself much more widely. Nothing else will be so life-giving and invigorating to the thinking part of the nation. No better antidote to the prevailing

superstitions in the very vital field of religion can be thought of. As all may not have the patience or the grounding required to follow with relish a strict course of reasoning, it has been thought better to place before them the bare bold propositions of Sankara on religion. Sankara should not merely be revered and admired but what is more important is that his thoughts and teachings should be more intimately and authoritatively known.

There is another advantage in presenting the "Sutras" (bare propositions of Sankara) first. It will be like the study of the map of a new city before one goes out to see it actually. This will insure against the path or the bearing being lost in the mazes of the city. It is better that a hold is obtained on the fundamentals of a subject before one launches oneself into its intricacies. Further, in these days of haste and hurry, a book, small in size yet giving the essential and salient features, will generally be more welcome.

The whole subject has been classified under four major heads: the Vedas (Scriptures); Karma (primarily rituals); Upasana (meditation to achieve prosperity) and Jnana Nishtha (meditation to realise Truth or God). Karma and Upasana constitute the **Pravritti Marga** (the path circling outwards). They are methods inevitably adopted, while one is in the initial stages of religious experience. Though there is ceaseless activity, that cannot free us from the bonds of slavery to Nature. Here the Devas and even God himself are but the means; one's prosperity and enjoyment, the end. Jnana Nishtha constitutes the **Nivritti Marga** (the path circling inwards). The man who was till now an extrovert now becomes an introvert. Now God becomes the end. Armed with right knowledge and ethical excellence, the march is straight on to the goal of **Atman or** God.

The factors and details of Karma, Upasana and Jnana are prescribed by the Pramanas which, for the Hindu religion, are

the Vedas or the Srutis. This book will serve to throw light on the theory and practice of the Hindu religion. It is fundamental in this context to have a correct idea of the place of the Sastras, and of the vital division of the passages of the text into two broad categories as **Vidhis and Arthavadas** or as **Vakyas and Vakyaseshas.** This is the great contribution of Acharya Jaimini in his Mimamsa Sastra.

In regard to practice, the relative values of the three stages of its psychological growth–Karma, Upasana, and Jnana Nishtha have to be carefully borne in mind. The stages of Karma and Upasana have to be outgrown to attain to Jnana as one has to outgrow his childhood and boyhood, the inevitable stages in a man's life, to attain his manhood. Sankara is a past-master in both the theory and the art of development of human personality until it bursts its shell of body and mind and expands into the whole universe. This development of personality is to be attained by **Jnana**, a new superconscious insight. That is why it is called the third eye of Siva, which destroys all ignorance and illusion. That this **Jnana** can be attained by Bhakti or Raja Yoga as well is the firm conviction of the Bhagavad Gita as well as of Sankara.

A few of the sayings recur in more than one chapter or section. These have been repeated in order to make the ideas relating to each section complete.

Swami Atmananda

I. SANKARA'S LIFE

Early Days

The Indian mind is more concerned with Truths than with details relating to personalities; only thoughts of men find recorded but not other facts of personalities. So it has not been possible for historians and literary critics to fix the dates connected with Sankara's life. Telang thinks that Sankara must have lived in the 6th century A.D.; but others assign him to the close of the eighth century and beginning of ninth (788-820 A.D.)

But there is greater unanimity of opinion about certain other incidents of his life. He was born at Kaladi in Kerala State of a Namboodiri family. He lost his father early but as he was a precocious boy, he completed his Vedic education and Sanskrit studies very early in life.

Though the Periyar river passing by Kaladi is not infested with crocodiles now, it must have been so centuries ago and a legend connects Sankara's Sanyas with a crocodile. Even at an early age, Sankara felt the call for Sanyas but his mother was loath to part with her only son, the solace of her widowhood. One day, when the boy and his mother were bathing in that river, Sankara was caught by a crocodile and was about to die. Then he begged his mother to give him permission to assume Sanyas as he was in imminent danger of death. The mother gave her consent. But lo! a marvel happened. The crocodile released its hold on Sankara. Sankara was now a Sanyasin with his mother's consent and left Kaladi in search of a Guru.

He found his Guru on the banks of the Narmada, in Govindapada, a disciple of the famous Gaudapada who had written the famous KARIKA on Mandukya Upanishad. By 16, his studies were over and the Guru sent his gifted disciple to Banaras to expound the pure and simple Hinduism of Vedanta.

Recognition

Sankara came to early recognition at Banaras. Pupils gathered round him to learn his exposition of Vedanta. It was during his stay at Banaras that his commentaries on the Gita, Upanishads and the Brahmaŝutra of Vyasa came to be written and studied by his pupils. The most famous pupil of this group is Padmapada.

The Chandala Incident

Even though an Advaitin who saw all the world as Brahman, one day, due to the force of his ingrained habit as a son of Kerala, he called on a Chandala to move off his path. The Chandala asked him whom he was calling off to move, the body or the soul? This opened the eyes of Sankara and he fell at once at the feet of the Chandala as if he were his Guru, and composed the famous 'Manisha Panchaka' of 5 slokas which have a refrain "he who has learnt to look upon all as Brahman, is really my Guru—be he a Chandala or a Brahmin."

This incident recalls to mind a similar one in Sri Ramakrishna's life. One day Ramakrishna heard a vendor of ice-cream calling out in the street. The vendor was called, but Ramakrishna found him to be a Mohamedan. His birth as a Brahmin instinctively revolted to buy an eatable from a Mlechchha. So he sent him off, but the deep Advaitic consciousness stung Ramakrishna to the quick and in an instant he recognised his fall from that Supreme Height in his behaviour, and in his having wounded the Mohamedan vendor. At once he called the vendor back and bought of him.

Such is the force of ingrained habits even after enlightenment.

Paramahamsa Parivrajaka

The rest of Sankara's life was spent as a wandering Sanyasin of the highest order, who had transcended all distinctions of

caste. All these travels were made with the sole object of preaching and teaching Vedantic religion. He attracted big crowds wherever he went and held discussions with eminent Pandits of other schools of thought. In these discussions his aim was not to win personal victory but to establish Vedantic truth. So he never chose to discredit his opponents and conceded whatever was acceptable to him in their school of thought. But on certain vital points he was unyielding and held his ground with his clear and incisive logic reinforced by Vedic texts if they were common ground. His travels extended practically over the whole of India, both North and South and East and West. One of the most famous of such encounters with the exponents of other schools of thought was the one with Mandana Mishra, the great exponent of Purva Mimamsa. But this will be dealt with separately. At last, he consolidated his work by establishing the four Sankara Maths at Badrinath, Puri, Sringeri, and Dwaraka.

The funeral of his mother

A small incident serves to reveal his loving heart and his natural human attachments. While parting from his mother he had given her his word that he would respect her wishes that her funeral should be performed by him. He got news of her last illness and was at her bed-side before she passed away. He requested the assistance of his villagers for cremating her dead body but orthodoxy was as usual blind and unyielding. How could a Sanyasin who had left all Karmas perform his mother's funeral? Even in the present century orthodoxy is no better. Sri Ramana Maharshi performed his mother's funeral on her death at Tiruvannamalai; he was long execrated by the Brahmins of the South for this un-Sastraic act.

Sankara cut the body of his mother and took the pieces to the funeral pyre. The cremation had to be done in the corner of the compound of the house. The ruler of the place passed

an edict that henceforward all Namboodiris shall have only similar funerals!

Last days

Sankara had many discussions throughout the rest of his life during his travels all over the country. But all his opponents did not take the defeat with equanimity. Towards the end of his life Sankara visited Assam and his opponent was a master of black magic as well. On defeat he exercised his black magic. Sankara got dysentery which would not get cured. But in spite of this Sankara travelled to the other end of India and cast off his body at Kedarnath.

India is one: Sanskrit is the cement

Sankara's life, apart from all other achievements, shows that even in those far-off days, all India was one in spite of its many regional languages and varying customs in the matter of dress and food. Is this binding force getting weaker in modern times?

Sankara, born in a corner of South India in Kerala, had his higher education in Central India and established his fame at Banaras in North India. Nowhere did he feel as a stranger nor was he treated as such.

In spite of the differences in language, dress, customs and habits of food, the thought and ideals of India were the same as recorded in Sanskrit. Vedas and Sastras were known and respected everywhere; higher life of man was moulded on these. Sanskrit language was known to the educated throughout India. Education till about a century ago meant familiarity with and proficiency in Sanskrit language and literature. Till about two centuries ago man reached his height in every branch of thought and in every walk of life in India as shown by a record of its positive sciences. All these were recorded in Sanskrit and studied in Sanskrit. Sanskrit language with its culture was thus the

great unifier of India. But for Sanskrit Sankara could not have had his triumphal tours in India and dominated it with his thought.

The need for his thoughts is not yet exhausted. They have to permeate India once more, nay, spread farther throughout the world.

II. SANKARA'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Sankara and Sri Ramakrishna

There would be few in India who would not have heard of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and his great and famous disciple Swami Vivekananda who carried the trumpet call of Vedanta to the farthest corners of foreign lands. They were born at a time of spiritual crisis in Hinduism, when the Indian intelligentsia in the middle of the 19th century felt like being between the devil and the deep sea of scientific ideas and the Christian religion of the conquerors.

The material sciences, the great advance in physics and chemistry, and rationalism had dominated the imagination of the West and, later on, of educated India. Science and reason then found no necessity for God. It became a fashion to be an agnostic if not an atheist. But if, for any reason, one thought that religion had a place in life, Hinduism was the one least fitted to guide and sway one's life. Christianity was the religion, the religion of men who ruled not merely India but other parts of the world as well. Hinduism consisted of a bundle of superstitious practices like idol worship, caste, inequality, injustice, untouchability, suppression of women, etc. It was fatalistic. Such a religion had no chance against the conquering Christianity, with its preaching of fraternity and equality and easy access to God's presence. When the people of India were in the grip of this crisis, Ramakrishna came to the rescue. He showed people the heart of the Hindu religion in his own per-

son. Yoga and Vedanta were not the fabrications of scheming Brahmins but held the great message of India to the world that "man is essentially divine." Ramakrishna proved this truth in his own life and his great disciple not only assimilated it but carried this great message to the whole world. That is the great significance of the lives of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

Sri Sankara

Sri Sankara was, in fact, Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda rolled into one. He lived in all a life of 32 years, while the combined life of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda was about 66 years. Sri Sankara did achieve the work of both in a more intensive manner in half their life-time. Further, Sankara lived in an age when the only means of locomotion was walking or the bullock-cart. The marvellous achievements of Sri Sankara can be properly appraised by the modern world only in the light of the joint lives of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda from 1836-1902.

Sankara's time

Sankara's time also was a period of great spiritual crisis in India. It was more than a thousand years since the blessed Lord Buddha had walked and preached his Message of Compassion and the Supremacy of Ethics. In fact, he preached the purest form of Hinduism as recorded in the Upanishads. He spoke of Dharma and Sangha but not of God. He discarded the restrictions of Varnasrama and admitted all into his fold irrespective of caste distinctions. In the course of the centuries following Buddha, Buddhists had evolved rigorous logic to defend their thought and rid themselves of superstitions. Buddha did not speak of God. Their logic did not feel the necessity for God. In this, they too were like the thinkers and scientists of the 19th century, rationalists and atheists. But the masses among Buddhists could not absorb any of this reason or

atheism. They knew Buddha and they worshipped him as God. Gigantic idols of Buddha came into existence and were worshipped with great pomp and splendour. Buddhist Jataka stories became the popular fare. Grovelling superstitions gained currency and the Buddhistic monks turned themselves into priests for these new ceremonies and the exponents of the Jataka stories. The spiritual life among Buddhists fell to a low ebb; the vigour and purity of the Blessed Lord had evaporated from their midst.

Revival of Hinduism

This was the opportunity for the revival of Hinduism. The Hindu thinkers availed themselves of this favourable opportunity. The fountain-head of Hindu religion was the Vedas and a new life was given to the teachings of the Vedas by Jaimini and his follower Kumarilabhatta. The Vedic religion was codified into the Sutras of the Purva Mimamsa and the Vedic rituals and sacrifices once more gained a position of honour and spread among the masses. As they won their admiration, Kumarilabhatta aimed at beating the Buddhists at their own game. He learnt logic under a great Buddhist master and defended the Vedas with that logic. For the Hindu masses who could not stand the Buddhistic logic, he prescribed sacrifices in their most exaggerated forms.

Thus, at this time, just before the advent of Sankara, India also was in a great spiritual crisis and dryness. The people, able to think, were caught between the Buddhistic logic and atheism on the one hand and the subtle interpretation of the Mimamsa on the other; the masses were caught between the Hindu Puranas and the Buddhistic Jataka stories, or gorgeous ceremonies before the image of Buddha or the elaborations of the Vedic sacrifice. Spiritual insight was conspicuous by its absence. Such was the atmosphere in India that called forth a Sankara.

Sankara

Sankara was a mystic, a philosopher and a poet—all rolled into one. To him, as to Sri Ramakrishna later, the Upanishads were not the fabrication of wonderful brains. They were to him the genuine records of mystic experiences beyond the senses and the mind. Like Ramakrishna, he had these experiences himself. The Upanishads served but to confirm these. He built his whole philosophy on this solid rock of experience and could easily roam in the fair fields of the Upanishads. He was an infant prodigy. He knew all the four Vedas and Vedangas at a very early age. He mastered the six systems of Indian philosophy and knew the strength and weakness of each system. As became a mystic, he had poetic genius. Unlike Sri Ramakrishna, he did not shrink from any study for he had to play the role of Vivekananda as well who was always an up-to-date scholar of his times and a devourer of even the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Sankara and Buddha

The whole world admits the wonderful compassion of the Buddha. It is too well-known to be expatiated on here. But it has to be emphasised that Sankara too had a most compassionate heart. It was not a helpless goat that moved his heart. It was the misery of man caused by his ignorance that moved him and made him wander to all the four corners of India like a man possessed. Man did not know the invaluable mine of bliss in himself but was, in utter ignorance, making frantic efforts to clutch at bliss from outside, thinking that wealth, woman, name and fame or a far-off heaven will give him happiness. Sankara found that he was himself the fountain of bliss and that this was an inheritance to be claimed by all. Man is ignorant of this truth and running after a will-o'-the-wisp. Sankara's heart was bleeding that man would not claim his inheritance. So he decided that for the rest of his life he would try his level best to convince man of his rich inheritance in himself. Vivekananda

spent the last ten years of his life travelling all over America, Europe and India with the same precious message. Sankara too spent the last eight years of his life wandering all over India from Kashmir and Badri in the north to Kerala and Kanchi in the south and from Assam in the east to Dwaraka in the west. This he did, not in the days of the travel facilities of the 20th century, but in the dark days of the 8th and 9th centuries. Would he have wandered like a man possessed, unless he had felt for the deep miseries that man suffered in vain, when it could be prevented by right knowledge and a practice based on it?

Sankara, typical of Hindu Genius

Trained in Yoga, Sankara was as great an adept in synthesis as in analysis. He had analysed the malady of the people of his day but he must discover the remedy and apply it. This he has done in a wonderful manner.

As has been stated, he had mastered the four Vedas and the six Darsanas and his prescription must be based on the national inheritance. The intellectual basis for his action should be built on the Vedas. But the heart of the Vedas was the Upanishads and the Gita, the compendium of the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras. As becomes a great synthesiser and a psychologist, he would not frighten people by producing something strange. He would give the people their own beloved books but with most satisfying explanations.

So his scheme was to uphold the Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahma Sutras of Vyasa, by his own commentaries. The people were won over as Sankara was the most brilliant supporter of the Vedas, so adored by them all.

But in the course of his commentaries on these most-prized books, he used his surgical knife of reason and experience as he did on all the other systems. The two systems, Nyaya and Vaiseshika, are spoken of as the one Nyaya system, the system

of Logic of the Hindus. This had evolved a wonderful technique of logic. This was mastered by him and used by him not only in the discussions he held with Pandits all over India but also in his own commentaries. But he boldly held that logic alone would not lead to truth. The bases of logic are observed facts, and observation is by the five senses. But there is a sphere beyond the senses and mind, just as the present-day atom is a subtle thing beyond the senses but not beyond the mind. The superconscious truths are beyond logic and thus he set a limit to the sphere of logic.

He accepted a great portion of the psychology of the Sankhya and the Yoga systems and recommended Yoga as an aid to meditation. But he held that the plurality of souls maintained by these sages was contrary to the Vedas and so these systems were invalid to this extent. This was an honour to the Vedas, though at the expense of these two great systems.

Sankara and Mandana

He dealt with Poorva Mimamsa not merely theoretically in his commentaries but also concretely so as to be seen even by the meanest intellect.

The greatest exponent of Poorva Mimamsa of his day was Kumarilabhatta, a famous commentator on Poorva Mimamsa. Sankara wished to meet him and have discussion with him, but it was too late. Bhatta was doing Prayaschitta for becoming a disciple of a Buddhistic teacher, by deliberately burning himself in a big fire of chaff and husk. So Bhatta recommended him to his brother-in-law Mandana Mishra.

Sankara met Mandana Mishra at Mahishmati and there was for over 18 days a long discussion at which Bharati, wife of Mandana, acted as the umpire. Mandana had to acknowledge defeat and in his wife's presence renounce Grihasthasram (householdership) and take to Sanyas as a result of his new conviction.

What can be more convincing to people than this, that the Vedic Karmas, however good they may be, are not sufficient and efficient to lead man to the final goal? The greatest advocate of rituals had to give them up as inadequate and walk the path of Vedanta.

The intellectual argument against Karma is very simple. Karma is action and every action produces results. Karmas are finite and their results too are finite. So how can Karma produce infinite bliss, the objective of man? Another aspect of Karma has to be noted. What is created by man by his action is bound to get destroyed. So how can Karma give indestructible bliss?

Here we see the supreme power of analysis of Sankara. But his power of synthesis was even greater. On this above-mentioned ground of destructibility of Karma, Sankara did not advocate the logical step of the abolition of all Vedic Karmas. Any attack on this most sensitive part of the Hindu, viz., his deference to the Vedas, especially in the days of Vedic revivalism against the Buddhists, would have been most unpopular. So the Vedic Karmas were to be performed by those who desired the results of these Karmas and did not care for eternal bliss.

But Sankara's genius recognised a more fundamental reason for retaining Karmas, which the Buddhists had not understood and which consequently brought ruin on their heads. Even though Buddha and his followers taught the 8 golden rules of conduct, the common masses could not feel enthusiasm about these alone. So came about the gorgeous worship of the mighty Buddha images. Sankara understood this well. Sankara said that the Vedas had two parts, the Karma Kanda and the Jnana Kanda. Both were equally valid. He further contended that the Mimamsakas were wrong in stating that Karma Kanda alone was valid. Both have to be accepted. Those who do not feel an inclination for Jnana practices need not, however, take them up. They may take up Karma Kanda and perform action. Action

is in the very nature of man, and not merely of children. So Sankara preached that both Karma Kanda as well as Jnana Kanda should be accepted by all the Hindus; only each had its own appropriate time. The days of Karma were over for Mandana Mishra. So it was but proper that he should take the next higher step of the practice of Jnana, i.e. concentration with self-control. So Mandana Mishra became his great disciple, Sureshwaracharya, the first head of the Sringeri Math. The greatest glory and act of synthesis of Sankara was the winning over of Mandana. Mandana first met Sankara with great scorn and treated him with contempt. But at last he became the ardent disciple of Sankara. The British first treated Gandhiji, another typical Hindu, also with contempt and disrespect. The power of synthesis of this Hindu, with his great knowledge of man and the world, at last triumphed. He fought the imperialists with his non-violence. The British became friends of Gandhiji in the end.

Sankara's Contribution

Sankara's contribution to the world of thought was indeed very great; in fact, he was a living embodiment of the teaching of the Gita.

Sankara too, like the Gita, analysed the thoughts of the Upanishads and disclosed the two strata of thought in it. The passages relating to Karma are meant for the beginners in spirituality. The Karmis' great superiority over materialists is that the ritualists believe in powers higher than themselves. They are partially correct and partially wrong. They instinctively recognise higher powers. So far they are right. But they think that the higher powers are outside themselves while, in fact, they are but in their own higher selves. And consistent with their thinking, they worship the outside gods to help them as the gods are more powerful and so could help them. So Karma

is a psychological necessity to them and based on the partial perception of this truth. Karmas will remain with man, only they must be purified from time to time. Old forms like our bodies become effete. So new forms are created. Yajnas give place to temple worship.

Panchayatana Puja

Sankara encouraged, therefore, such of the Vedic rites as did not involve animal sacrifice and some forms of Upasanas like the Pranava Vidya and Sandhyopasana.

But temples and worship of deities had come into the Hindu fold also, rivalling the Buddhistic shrine. Many new and obnoxious cults also, like the hideous worship of Bhairava, Shakti and Ganapati, had come into vogue but had taken most gross and revolting forms. Here also Sankara used his powers both of analysis and synthesis. He showed that these practices offended the best principles of Vedic worship and were to be given up. Pure forms were substituted in the place of the vicious ones; along with these three Gods mentioned above, the old Murthies, Shiva and Vishnu were also being worshipped. Sankara instituted the worship of all these five Gods, Sun, Ambika, Vishnu, Ganapati and Shiva all on the same pedestal. This emphasised the idea that these are not five different Gods, but they are the one God worshipped in five different forms in different parts of India, each individual choosing according to his bent. Some wrongly think Sankara taught only Jnana and had no place for Karma. Sankara held that the place of Jnana was all-important but he knew equally well that many could not give up Karma and so they should be taught the most beneficial forms of Karma. Thus it is that the Panchayatana Puja (the worship of five Gods) came into vogue in Smartha homes. The other name for this is Shiva-Puja. Smarthas mean the followers of Smritis as of old, in contrast to those who follow the new paths set by Ramanuja and Madhwa.

His Great Commentaries

Sankara's commentaries on the Gita, the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras of Vyasa are his greatest contributions to the world of philosophical thought and higher religious study. These should not be mistaken for works on Theology, though they are written as commentaries on Scriptural texts. The adoption of this form was to impress on the people of those times, who were so much wedded to the Vedas, that he was not departing from the path of the Rishis, as Buddha did in their eyes. They contain elucidation of fundamental philosophical and religious principles in short and neat compass, so that the main trends of the Vedas are not missed in a forest of words and bewilderingly different practices.

Further, his exposure of the weakness of the five other systems of philosophy came in, in their appropriate places and occasions. But he accepted the techniques evolved by each school for the investigation of truth; no system was rejected outright by him. Only their faults have been exposed, and pointed out to enable man to take to the right path.

Establishment of Maths

For the preservation and propagation of his teachings, Sankara established Maths almost in the four corners of India, at Badri in the Himalayas, at Puri in Orissa, at Sringeri in the South and Dwaraka in Gujarat in the West. That these Maths function even to this day shows the vigour of the movement for the propagation of Vedanta started by Sankara. Sankara though born in the south had an all-India view-point. So the Maths were located to serve all parts of India. Sankara's action in this respect corresponds to that of Vivekananda again, who created the Ramakrishna Order and established the Belur and Mayavati Maths before he passed away.

Sankara had a Modern Scientific Mind

Sankara though he lived at least 12 centuries ago had a most modern and scientific outlook. Even though he seems to swear, along with the Mimamsaka, by the Vedas, it has to be clearly understood that he is absolutely free from theological obsession. The one statement that he wants man to believe from the Vedas is the statement that "the soul is potentially divine." Religion to him consists in bringing out this divinity of man latent in him. With him, as with others in other religions, this divinity of man, though hidden from the senses of man, is an obstinate fact of the super-conscious. Sankara defines Jnana as "dependent on the object" (Vastu-tantra) and not on the hallucinations of the Sadhaka's mind. (Buddhi-tantra).

The potentiality of the atom, when first enunciated by Einstein, was hard to believe. Even then it was not a hallucination of Einstein. Later on, experiments proved it true. Perhaps, it has been proved tragically true to the world by the horrible Atom Bomb. Sankara's idea of the divinity of the human personality can be compared to Einstein's idea of the potentiality of the atom. Sankara says that this statement relates to an already existing thing, not perceived now but which can be verified and experienced by proper discipline of the mind. Thus, he has quite a modern scientific attitude. All problems treated by him have been viewed by him from this high standpoint of experiment and verification for oneself, even though first begun on belief.

But the object of the experiment here is not a thing outside in the world but it is in oneself. One's own mind is the great laboratory. The scientist too has to be untossed by passions if he is to have a clear vision; he has to cultivate high concentration as well as freedom from passion. Then he will be able to verify the truth in himself. Sankara challenges those who want to question this statement of the Vedas to accept here also this

course of discipline before it can be verified. An astronomer has to train himself to the use of the telescope and even to use more and more powerful telescopes before he can observe the heavens. But if anyone tells the astronomer that all his statements about stars and heavens are all his hallucinations unless the astronomer can make him see these things with his naked eyes he will only be laughed at as an ignorant man.

A similar readiness to undergo discipline in purity and concentration is a pre-requisite for the realisation of this great spiritual truth. This is the message of Sankara for the modern world. Divinity of man exists in him already; man, by his efforts, has to remove the veil that hides this reality.

According to Sankara all the rest of the Vedas may be ignored by one if he so chooses. But none striving for a spiritual life can ignore this grand truth of the divinity of the soul, and the preliminary discipline to come by this grand possession in himself. Going to heavens, etc., may be questioned but not attaining to divinity of the soul in oneself as it can be "experienced" here and now while living in the body.

Sankara was many-sided

There is a tendency among the scholars to associate Sankara with Jnana alone. This is doing a great injustice to him. No doubt, even to this day, Sankara is the most excellent propounder of the Jnana Yoga. But that was only a part of his work and himself.

Sankara has not merely written the commentaries on Prasthanatraya (the three basic works) but he is the author of innumerable Stotras of great poetic excellence and of feeling for and devotion to God. These are perhaps more popular among the people of India than are his commentaries. Sankara characterises Jnana Nishtha itself as an extreme ardour towards realisation of the soul. The Jnani has to be full of feeling, and emo-

tion and avidity to realise the truth. Jnana of Sankara is never a cold study of books or cleverness in discussing Sastras. It is a warm-heated attempt and striving to realise the truth. When this attitude is turned towards the personal god, it becomes Bhakti. To think of Sankara as all-Jnana and no-Bhakti is to misjudge him and ignore a good deal of his most popular Stotras. To him Para-Jnana is identical with Para-Bhakti.

Another charge that is made against Sankara is that he was against all Karmas. Sankara has no doubt stated that rituals and Jnana run in opposite directions. But he was for all-Yatna (intense striving) to conquer the mind. He was for all-effort to relieve the ignorance of men, man's greatest enemy. All the last sixteen years of his life were devoted exclusively for this service of man by means of Jnana. He was as good a Karma Yogin as Buddha himself. His life was, in fact, a complete synthesis of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma Yogas as the Gita is. His life was a complete demonstration of the teachings of the Gita.

Sankara is perhaps one of the least understood of the great Acharyas even among the Sanskrit-knowing public. But because of his strictly scientific attitude of mind, his deep grasp of the fundamentals of religion and his lucid exposition, he is the one Acharya who will easily appeal to the modern mind. In the interests of pure religion, not merely of Hinduism, it is necessary that this modern age should read and understand him better.

He is one of the boldest thinkers the world has ever known. In the course of his meticulous exposition of the nature of the Eternal Truth, he seems merciless in his exposure of the foibles of the popular Hindu religion of his times. His one endeavour was to bring out the fundamentals of the Hindu religion out of the tangled web of Hindu religious literature. He has a most comprehensive and elevated view of the human personality.

Even in his eagerness to bring to the limelight the higher but hidden aspects of man's personality, he never forgets that the common man is in the merciless grip of his lower nature. So he comes down to the level of the common man to raise him up.

Ethics superior to Rituals

While allowing for rituals their indispensable place in the childhood of a religious life, he was uncompromising in his insistence that only on the basis of strict and advanced ethical life can the superstructure of spiritual or religious life of realization of God or the Self be built up. Rituals and Swadharma are the essential atmosphere for the practice of detachment. But performance of rituals as such does not lead to this detachment; there is a method of doing it in a proper attitude of mind which helps to evolve this detachment. This in turn paves the way for an easy ethical life.

Sankara's Synthetic Genius

Sankara has in a full measure the characteristic genius of the Hindu to assimilate and absorb whatever is health-giving in the atmosphere about him. Mimamsakas, in their enthusiasm for rituals which were regarded by them as their Kamadhenu, characterized the Upanishads as mere Arthavada (panegyrics) necessary to emphasise the importance of rituals, but leading to no independent thought. Sankara in his admiration for the Vedanta was not oblivious of the achievements of the Mimamsakas in the science of interpretation of the Vedic texts as shown below.

One of the great glories of the Hindu religious thinkers was that, though they all based their Siddhantas on the authority of the Vedas, they were not fundamentalists like the followers of the Bible or Koran. No school of Hindu religious thought accepted the necessity to regard every sentence of the Vedas as equally authoritative and so to be justified to the

people. They classified Vedic sentences into two broad categories: (1) Vidhi (commands or injunctions) and (2) Vidhisesha or Arthavada (supplements or panegyrics). This original and bold conception saved them from many of the pitfalls of the fundamentalists of other religions.

I fear many of us Hindus, who are naturally devoted to all kinds of our own Scriptures, do not understand or realize the very existence and much less the importance of this basic principle of interpretation. So we are misled to believe that every sentence of the Vedas has to be justified at its face value. We forget that Jaimini, who is still the Acharya for most of us and who built up his edifice of ritualism on the sheer authority of the Vedas, regarded the whole body of the Mantras i.e. the Samhitas and all the Upanishads as Vidhisesha or Arthavada. According to him, the statements and propositions in the hymns and the Upanishads need not be taken seriously at their face value. They are there only in some way to subserve the text on rituals. This led Jaimini into the pitfall of ignoring the grand thought and life taught by Vedanta. While we also follow Jaimini into the pit, we forget the great lesson that he taught in regard to the texts. We forget that later religious literature, the Itihasas, Puranas and others, do abound in Arthavadas and so all passages are not to be given a uniform authoritativeness.

Sankara accepted this division and most of the other rules of interpretation framed by Jaimini. But his view of the Vedas was fundamentally different. Sankara regarded the Vedas as Jnapaka or revealing the truths while Jaimini recognized them as Karaka or mandatory with dire consequence on disobedience. Also while Jaimini's view leads to exclusion of the hymns and the Upanishads, Sankara's comprehended all parts of the Vedas alike in its scope. Both Karma Kanda and Jnana Kanda were equally authoritative. Another vital difference between

the Acharyas in the canons of interpretation was on the test of **Pramanya.** Sankara's test on this runs as follows:—

न वाक्यस्य वस्त्वन्वाख्यानं क्रियान्वाख्यानं वा प्रामाण्यकारणम् ।
किं तर्हिऽनिश्चितफलवद्विज्ञानोत्पादकत्वम् ।
तद्यत्रास्ति तत्प्रमाणवाक्यम् । यत्र नास्ति तदप्रमाणम् ॥

(Bhashya on Br. Up. I. iv. 7)

"The test of the authority or otherwise of a passage is not whether it states a fact or orders an action but its capacity to generate certain and fruitful knowledge. A passage that has this is authoritative; while the one that lacks it is not." This test, again, is beautifully comprehensive and inclusive; Jaimini's test included only the injunction of Karma Kanda. Sankara's test includes these injunctions of Karma Kanda as well as the emphatic assertions of Jnana Kanda. These are admirable instances of Sankara's genius for the synthesis of differing ideologies. He insisted that Karmas confer ephemeral results and are incapable of obviating misery.

But Sankara's penetrating intellect knew where to stop in this synthesis or inclusion of ideas; he emphatically demolished the Siddhanta of Jaimini that Karma alone and by itself was the Kamadhenu in religious life. But, as already stated above, he accepts that it had its inevitable place in the early stage of the religious or spiritual growth of man. Here is a good instance of his catholicity. Similar was his relationship with the other four Darsanas. The technique evolved or adumbrated by other famous schools of thought was mostly accepted, nay, used by him, in his exposition of Vedanta; but the untenable Siddhantas or conclusions were exploded without mercy.

His Scientific Attitude

But what will appeal most to the modern man is Sankara's strictly scientific attitude to religion. The ambition of science

is to reveal the truths of the external nature; the field of religion is the disclosure of the still more marvellous truths of the internal nature of man. Sankara is a master-expounder of the latter. The science of today has in a sense become transcendental; but naturally its field still is the outside world. The most important domain of the present-day science is the mighty atom, far beyond the ken of the senses of man. Science has become less dogmatic than it was in the 19th century; one is not sure to what more subtle depths it may take us.

In a similar manner the special field of exploration of our Rishis was the inner man, his consciousness. But this was also transcended. The Scriptures reveal the truths relating to the super-consciousness in ourselves and ultimately of the whole universe. As illustrated by the life of Mahatma Gandhi, soul force is even mightier than the explosive force of the atom. We are glad that the more thoughtful in all the nations are now in a mood to listen to and think about the great truth of the Atma.

The marvellous feat of Sankara is that the tests proposed for the verification of the truths of religion are of the very same standard as has been adopted by science. The two tests of science are that it can be verified, and that it is universal. Sankara states that the culmination of religious i.e. ethical discipline is the experience or realization of the Self or the Supreme here and now.

"अनुभवादयश्च यथासंभवं इह प्रमाणम् ।"

"अनुभवावसानत्वात् भूतवस्तुविषयत्वात् च ब्रह्मज्ञानस्य ।"

"It is true because of one's own experience." "Brahmajnana is the experience of an existing entity as the culmination of a course of discipline." He says that this realization is in glaring contrast to the "attainment of Heaven by means of sacrifice." The attainment of Heaven has to be accepted merely on the authority of the Vedas. It cannot be experienced here and now. So doubts about its reality are not quite out of place.

But the experience of the Self is not easy. Even in the intellectual sphere the Theory of Relativity is beyond the comprehension of 99% of the educated or intelligent people. An understanding of this difficulty must make it plain why the more subtle experience of the realization of the Self or God is beyond the depths of 99.99% of the people. There are not many Einsteins nor are there many Ramakrishna Paramahamsas or Ramana Maharshis.

Another characteristic of science is that a scientific phenomenon is not unique but universal. If an atom can be split in America, Americans are easily prepared to concede that Russians too can split it. Christians believe that Christ is unique. He is a 'न भूतो न भविष्यति'. Mohammedans think Mohamed is the one Prophet who is unique. According to Sankara, these are but examples of realized souls and there is to be repetition of such Prophets. Only these must have gone through a severe course of ethical discipline and, by their intense purity and concentration, transcended the bounds of ordinary consciousness.

Thus Sankara brings to bear quite a scientific mind on his exposition of religion. Even though he lived in what may be termed the medieval age, he is more modern than many of the modern scientists in his conception and treatment of religion. There is nothing to be wondered at if Sankara is not properly known in Europe or America. But the great pity is that his greatness is not realised in his own land of Bharatavarsha.

So a humble attempt is being made to place before the readers his ideas on many aspects of religion, in his own words.

Why not understood?

Two causes have contributed to the prevailing state of ignorance regarding Sankara's teachings.

The standard works of Sankara are his commentaries on the Gita, the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras. The traditional

way of learning permitted the study of these only after a fairly elaborate course of study of Sahitya (Literature), Vyakarana (Grammar), Nyaya (Logic) and Mimamsa (Inquiry). It cannot be denied that a fair grasp of their technique is no doubt necessary for the comprehension of Sankara's Bhashya on the Prasthanatraya. But in this scheme of studies two serious mishaps happen. First, in studying these auxiliaries, many theories, which have been put forth by these Sastras on serious problems and exploded by Sankara, are accepted as gospel truths by the beginner. How Mimamsa is dangerously misleading in two or more important matters has been shown above. Secondly, often enough the Sanskrit study ends with these auxiliaries or their higher studies and Vedanta is not taken up at all, with the result that the students of Sanskrit are not benefited by the flood of light thrown by Sankara on the subtler aspects of human nature. What is more, they do not come to know that many of the theories they learn in other Sastras have been exploded by Sankara and so are not worthy of study and acceptance.

Another disadvantage to a student of Vedanta is that Sankara has given his expositions of many serious subjects and propositions while commenting on the text of these great books. No one can find out easily where an important topic has been dealt with. The method adopted by Sankara has thus no correspondence to the systematic and logical development of successive topics that we are accustomed to in great modern philosophical and scientific works. Even so, the fundamental propositions of Sankara, which are his own contributions to the Indian philosophical thought, lie like a needle in a haystack.

It would be a service to the world of religion and philosophy if these thoughts are picked up and given in a systematic manner in his own words. My humble effort is to render this service.

It would be a greater service to the beginners of a study of religion and philosophy in general and Hindu thought in particular if his marvellous yet simple conceptions of the fundamentals of this important subject are placed before them as the first subject of study even before their minds are warped by exploded theories of other famous and popular thinkers. The weapons forged by these later teachers are indeed very useful for a clear grasp of the Sanskrit Sastraic literature; but the fact still remains that their Siddhantas (conclusions) have not stood the test of Sankara and so can much less stand the onslaughts of modren science. Sankara's Siddhantas can successfully withstand these. Sankara, as has been shown, is quite modern and, what is more, scientific. His teachings withstand the test of ages to come.

CHAPTER I

THE VEDAS—SCRIPTURES

Their Source, Scope and Interpretation

Why the Vedas (Scriptures) at all?

Every religion bases its authority on Scriptures. The Hindu religion has as its basis the Vedas; Christianity the Bible; Mohammedanism is founded on Koran. All these are alike regarded, each by its followers, as the Sacred Book and as forming a class quite apart from the other books in the same languages. They are regarded as Revelations and have been given to the world by Prophets. The Hindu Prophets have been called Rishis; the Christians have their Prophets, Jesus the Christ being the most important; the Mohammedans have their Prophet, Mohamed, to whom the Koran owes its origin.

What is the difference between these Prophets and the authors of other books? Why are these books called Books of Revelation? The Sages or Rishis of India and the Prophets of other lands were men of great piety and deep meditation, and these great books are records of their experience while they were in the highest and subtlest states of meditation. The fundamentals of these books are the records of the truths realised by them for the first time in their deep meditations. They have themselves called these Revelations, i.e. experiences different from the ones derived by them with the aid of their five senses or by reasoning.

Animals mostly act by their instincts; yet they too have knowledge derived from their senses, perceptions (pratyaksha). Man is higher in the scale of creation because he has the great gift of reason (anumana), which the animals have not, at least to such a high degree. But the Prophets by their great purity, compassion and wonderful meditation have risen to still greater

heights; Prophets alone have come by the acme of human personality and as such possess a new awareness which finds expression in these Revelations (Sabda).

Animals are dominated and guided by instincts; man becomes man when he is guided by reason and morality; but the Prophets alone possess a new awareness resulting in their Revelations. The Scriptures and the sacred books in every religion thus form rightly a class apart, as records of this new awareness of these Prophets; the other books like the books on science are records of man's observation and reason while some others are the creations of his wonderful imagination and reflection. The latter may or may not correspond to reality.

Modern Psychology recognizes the existence of the subconscious mind, the seat of the instincts and of the great many important involuntary functions of man. Above the sub-conscious comes the consciousness, the seat of reasoning, will and imagination. But Prophets have come by a faculty latent in every man, the superconscious, which other men have not yet developed but they alone have developed by their intense purity and deep meditation. The Rishis of India were those who had developed the superconsciousness and, as a result of their new awareness, given the Vedas to the world. The Vedas record the truths of superconsciousness.

Taking an analogy from modern science on light, there is not only the ordinary light seen by every man. Science has revealed to us the existence of infra-red rays and also of ultra-violet rays which do not come within the scope of perception by the eyes of man. Similarly, taking the mind, there is not only the sphere of consciousness which is within the experience of every man, but Indian Yoga has revealed the existence of the subconscious as well as the superconscious levels in man. The superconsciousness is the sphere of religion and the source of scriptures. The Rishis and the Prophets had come by the super-

conscious, a phenomenon which even a so-called scientific age cannot afford to ignore, if it wishes for real and lasting peace and happiness.

Thus man has not only two sources of knowledge but three, namely knowledge from sense perceptions, knowledge from reasoning and knowledge from the superconscious. The common name given to these three sources of knowledge in Sanskrit is Pramanas. The three Pramanas are termed in Sanskrit as Pratyaksha, Anumana and Sabda respectively.

The New Source of Knowledge

Why are the scriptures called Sabda, a word which means merely "SOUND?" When a man communicates his knowledge to another he does so by sound, that is, by speech in his own language. Why should the third Pramana alone be called Sabda (the sound) in the Hindu religious books?

When a sense perception is communicated, the two parties to the communication have had the same or closely allied experience; the hearer can understand the words of the other by recalling his own experience. So also when any knowledge derived from sources of reasoning is communicated, the hearer comes by a new experience not known to him till then, but it is known and comprehended by him now, through his own intellect and imagination. But when a superconscious experience is stated, there is no common ground between the two even after the statement is completed. The hearer has not yet developed in himself the power or the faculty to understand the superconscious experience. He has only the words of the speaker to rely on; he has to retain it in his mind; the experience of it comes only later on, perhaps years after. As the hearer in this case has only the words of the speaker to rely on for a long time, his support for a long time is the sound of the words or Sabda alone, not backed by his perception or intellect or imagination. Thus it is Sabda or the word describing the revelations alone that becomes

his reliance for a long time till he realizes it by his experience in himself, by purity and meditation. Is not the statement "the world is God" ununderstandable? But it records the experience of Sages (see Nos. 253–261).

Sense perception (Pratyaksha) and reasoning (Anumana) are quite common in the ordinary world as sources of knowledge. In science these two alone form the basis. Science relates to the world external to man.

But religion relates to the inner experience of man, when he transcends his mind or ordinary consciousness. Science limits itself to the sphere of consciousness.

Religion begins in Belief but ends in Experience

But as the field of religion is really the superconscious, the sphere above the normal mind, one has to begin practice of religion by relying on words one has heard, but has not comprehended for lack of experience; one has to rely on belief for a long time but he has to end by gaining the experience recorded in the scripture; the belief has to be verified in one's life. Then only religion becomes complete. A man, though he can rely on the words of religion for a time, should not lean on them always. The belief must be consummated in an indubitable experience. Thus religion may begin with belief in the words of the Sages, but it has to end in the confirmation of these words by one's own experience. Sankara clinches this thesis with his statement अनुभवावसानत्वात् भूतवस्तुविषयत्वात् च ज्ञानस्य (Janana ends in direct experience and relates to an already existing reality). (S.B.I. 1.2.)

Mimamsa–the Science of Interpretation of Texts

But the scriptures as they have come down to us are not, as a matter of fact, merely and entirely the records of superconscious experiences of the Rishis or the Prophets. They often contain matters uttered by these Rishis while they were in their

lower states of mind. Anyhow as one has to begin the practice of religion by taking the texts as gospel truth, these texts of the scriptures have to be properly assessed and understood. Hence the birth of Mimamsa Sastra among the Hindus.

The first great principle enunciated by the interpreters was that all the sentences found recorded in the scriptures are not the records of superconscious experience of the Prophets and the Sages, and that matters within the field of perception and reason are also found recorded there. So words recording superconscious experience have to be well defined and understood and differentiated from those founded on perception or reasoning. These latter are technically termed Anuvadas (passages merely permitted to be retained along with the genuine religious texts). These Anuvadas have to stand the test of experience and reasoning of ordinary persons not become Prophets yet.

The real records of the superconscious have been called the Vakyas (the sentences) or Vidhis (the Commands) and the rest are called Vakya-seshas (supplements to the important sentences or Vidhisesha). These subserve in one way or other to bring out the implications of "the sentences." These subsidiary sentences are also called Arthavadas.

This division of the Vedic sentences into the main and the subsidiary has been accepted by all schools of Indian religious thought. The Hindu commentators of the Vedas have not therefore felt any necessity to accept the literal import of every Vedic sentence or justify them. The Sage Jaimini, the author of Mimamsa, regarded the whole of the Upanishads as Arthavadas, sentences whose literal import need not be taken into account at all. As such he did not feel called upon to comment upon the Upanishads in his great book. It was left to the Sage Vyasa and his great commentator Sankara to see that there were Vakyas or main sentences in the Upanishads which had a very potent influence in the life of man. Thus came the Uttara Mi-

mamsa, with its author the Sage Vyasa and the great commentator Sri Sankara. The word 'Uttara' means 'later.'

Sankara and Mimamsa

Sankara accepted the fundamental division of the Vedic texts into Vakyas and Arthavadas (the main and the subsidiary). He thus avoided the pitfalls of fundamentalism of some of the interpreters of the Bible, who felt the necessity to support and justify the literal import of every sentence in the Bible.

But Sankara did not accept the test of authoritativeness given by Sage Jaimini. Jaimini's definition of authoritativeness takes in Karma (commands to do) alone, which thus enabled him to exclude the Upanishads. Sankara's definition comprehends both commands to do Karma and declarations about the fruitful Jnana also (see No. 12).

The Vedas not "Commands" of God

Further he takes a scientific view of the Vedas as not commands to act or refrain but as enunciations of new truths, be they in the path of Karma or Jnana (see No. 15). His proposition, that the scriptures or the Vedas are not the "Commands" of God and so are not mandatory, may give a rude shock to the popular idea prevalent not only amongst large sections of the Hindus but the other religionists as well. His dictum is that the Vedas are Jnapaka and not Karaka; they reveal truths and do not issue any commands. The Vedas reveal superconscious truths as science reveals the truths of the world of the senses. Vedic truth serves to transform man the brute into man the divine.

According to Sankara, the means prescribed by the Vedas for this transformation are a life of absolute purity and intense meditation out of eagerness to come face to face with Truth. He emphasises that this and meditation serve only to wear away our spiritual blindness; only then does the omnipresent and effulgent Truth shine in all its glory in our hearts.

He defines Jnana as "Vastu Tantra", knowledge dependent on the nature of the object to the known, and not on the fancies and speculations of the investigator. He defines Karma as Purushatantra, dependent on the activities of the man who does it (see No. 244).

Truth according to him is unique and so cannot have alternatives, as Karmas may have. (See sayings Nos. 40 & 47b). This definition of the knowledge of Truth as Vastu Tantra, rightly entitles him to a place among the scientists and philosophers, in contrast to theologians.

Another proposition of his is that each Pramana has its own distinct sphere into which the other two cannot trespass. Just as the ear can but hear and the eye but see, and each cannot take up the work of the other, so do the Vedas convey knowledge in a sphere different from that of Science. They are in fact complementary. So if the world will be content with the gains from Science alone, the world will be a big loser. Such a world, choosing voluntarily to be blind, will deny itself the treasures of the world of Spirit. The world refusing to go beyond Science has been confronted by the monster of the Atom Bomb. Conversely, if statements are found in the scriptures contrary to Science and are proved so by observation and reasoning, these may be rejected without hesitation (see Nos. 20 & 23).

Sankara's contributions to the Vedic Mimamsa are thus fundamental and considerable. There are other but minor contributions of his as well. It can be said that, without a proper comprehension of these, a proper understanding of the trend of the Vedas or the whole field of religion will be incomplete and difficult. It is sad to state that all these have not been popularly recognised and appreciated.

It is remarkable that, unlike other religious teachers, Sankara has based many of his important propositions like Adhyasa

(superimposition), limitations of Karma, and the power and efficiency of Jnana to dispel ignorance, on Drishta (ordinary experience) and not on the authority of the Vedas. The one and perhaps the only one proposition that he asks us to believe on the authority of the Vedas, is **the identity of the Self with Brahman** and its corollary Sarvatmabhava, that Atman is one for the whole universe.

Pramanas in General

१. न च दृष्टे अनुपपन्नं नाम, दृष्टत्वात् एव।

1. Facts of perception cannot be challenged on the ground of improbability because they have been perceived (S B. 4-1-2 Br. 4-3-6).

Note:—When the sense experience is valid, it cannot be questioned. The most proper thing is to accept facts. Arguments are, in fact, based on facts. Even the Vedas cannot controvert direct experience.

२. न हि प्रत्यक्षं अनुमानेन बाधितुं शक्यते।

2. Certainly perception cannot be nullified by inference (Br. 4-3-6).

३. न च अनुमानं प्रत्यक्षविरोधे प्रामाण्यं लभते।

3. An inference is no authority as against perception (Br. 2-1-20).

Note:—A famous story from the life of Galileo will be a good illustration of Pratyaksha Pramana as against Anumana and will make the meaning clear. There was dispute among learned scholars of Galileo's times as to whether a dead fish or a living fish would reach the ground sooner when dropped from the top of a tower. The dispute raged long and fierce. Young Galileo was a witness to the unceasing battle of words. He got up the Leaning Tower of Pisa with two fishes, one living and the other dead, and dropped them down simultaneously.

The scholars perceived that both touched the ground at the same time. Their perception (Pratyaksha) silenced them. Their reasoning (inference) had no further use in the matter under controversy.

४. स्वविषयशूराणि हि प्रमाणानि श्रोत्रादिवत् ।

4. The means of knowledge are powerful in their own respective spheres like the ear, etc. (Br. II, 1-20).

Note:—The ear can hear but not see. The eye can see but not hear. Each organ gives the knowledge of a different phase of the world. This is an analogy to better comprehend Nos. 9A and 9B. As the eye, nose and ear have different spheres of knowledge, so also all the three Pramanas (perception, reasoning and Sabda) have distinctly different spheres. Sabda or Sruti does not refer to anything within the sphere of the senses or reason. Conversely, an express Vedic statement, even when it seems to contradict experience or reason, has to be accepted as its sphere transcends these two. See No. 17.

५. न च प्रमाणं प्रमाणान्तरेण विरुद्ध्यते ।

5. And one means of knowledge does not contradict another (Br. II-20).

Note:—Eyes, nose, ear, etc. do not contradict each other. They are in fact complementary. Man has a richer experience of the world because of the five senses. If one of them is not there, he is the poorer for it. Similarly, Sabda Pramana deals with a sphere different from that of the other two. These are to be taken as supplementing one another and not contradicting. Sabda may seem to contradict but it does not really do so. Sabda adds to the richness of our experience and knowledge.

६. प्रमाणान्तराविषयमेव प्रमाणान्तरं ज्ञापयति ।

6. The scope of one source of knowledge is what is not within the scope of other sources of knowledge (Br. II-20).

७. श्रुतिविरोधे न्यायाभासत्वोपगमात् ।

7. Any reasoning that contradicts the Sruti is a fallacy (Br. IV-3-22).

Note:—Validity of a Sruti statement cannot be questioned, not only by the senses but by reason also. The sphere of reason is within consciousness while that of the Vedas is above it.

Sabda Pramana (Vedas)—its Scope

८. यत् स्वतोऽप्राप्तं तच्छास्त्रेण बोधितव्यम् ।

8. What is not automatically or naturally known has to be instructed by Sastra (Ai. Intro.).

Note:—This will apply even to our books on science; they convey information to man on matters not so ordinarily evident to him, but they nevertheless convey useful information. This is a feature which they share with the Vedas as will be seen in No. 12 and in the next one.

९ए. श्रुतिश्च नोऽतीन्द्रियार्थविषये विज्ञानोत्पत्तौ निमित्तम् ।

9A. Srutis (Vedas) are the means to furnish us with knowledge of spheres of existence beyond our senses (Tai. II-6).

९बी. श्रुतिश्च नः प्रमाणं अतीन्द्रियविषयविज्ञानोत्पत्तौ ।

9B. The Vedas constitute our source of knowledge about truths beyond our sense-perception and mind (S.B. 2-3-1).

Note 9A and B:—These explain why we have to go beyond our physical sciences. The world or universe is not exhausted by what is perceived by our senses and by our reason based on perceptions. The recent researches into the atomic structure have disclosed an aspect of the world undreamt of by man. Similarly the mind of man is not exhausted by his consciousness. There are spheres in man beyond his consciousness. The subconscious is one such region, but there is a more important region beyond consciousness which has been experienced by

very pure and high souls, the Rishis; and the Vedas are a record of their experiences.

Atomic science relates to spheres beyond the senses in the external world. Religion relates to spheres beyond consciousness in the constitution of the internal world of man himself.

१० यथाप्राप्तमेव कारकास्तित्वं उपादाय कर्माणि विदधत् शास्त्रं न कारकास्तित्वे व्याप्रियते ।

10. Being compelled to recognise the existence of the various factors of action, the Scriptures prescribe various Karmas (rituals). It does not (here) deal with the reality of these factors (Tai. 1-11).

Note:—Sankara's firm opinion is that Karmas do not lead to Truth. Yet they are found in the Vedas. So, are not rituals and everything connected with them equally valid as truth? Sankara contends that the Vedas do not declare them as leading to Truth. Man feels impelled to act, believing in the reality of multiplicity. The Vedas only prescribe means to satisfy this impulse. They do not deal with the reality or otherwise of the factors of Karma in Karma Kanda.

११. शास्त्रहेतुत्वात् धर्माधर्मविज्ञानस्य ।

11. The Vedas are our authority for our knowledge of right Karmas and wrong Karmas (S.B. 3-1-15).

Note:—Mimamsakas hold that natural acts, like suckling a child or feeding it or nursing it when sick, however good they may be, cannot be called Dharma. There must be the element of अपूर्वता (something not seen before, say, not in common with animals) in Dharma. So what is declared by the Vedas alone (and not found in nature) is Dharma; and what is prohibited by the Vedas is Adharma. Smritis (manuals on rituals etc.) composed by Rishis are also a secondary source of Dharma. This

definition has been widened by Vedantins as has been done by the Gita. Before the Gita, sacred acts were of a category different from secular acts; this difference was done away with in the Gita. Vedic Karmas, no less than natural acts, cause bondage. But both these, done without attachment to fruits, will serve to help man out of bondage.

Vedic Karmas serve to bring their own special results as stated in the Gita.

Jnana Kanda

Introduction to No. 12:

A great contribution made by Sankara to the Mimamsa Sastra has to be pointed out here. He has given a definition of Pramana Vakya (authoritative sentence in a long text) which not only includes Jaimini's definition but goes far beyond it to cover portions which Jaimini has expressly excluded as merely declaratory and eulogistic. Jaimini's dictum is, "the aim of the Vedas being the performance of Karma, passages not germane to Karma are of no use or importance." As a result of this, the whole of the Upanishads was considered beneath notice by Jaimini.

Here is given Sankara's definition of Pramana Vakya.

१२. न वाक्यस्य वस्त्वन्वाख्यानं क्रियान्वाख्यानं वा प्रमाण्याप्रमाण्यकारणं, किं तर्हि ? निश्चितफलवद्विज्ञानोत्पादकत्वम् । तद्यत्रास्ति तत्प्रमाणं वाक्यं, यत्र नास्ति तदप्रमाणम् ।

12. The test of the authority or otherwise of a passage is not whether it states a fact or prescribes a course of action, but its capacity to generate indubitable and fruitful knowledge. A passage that has this is authoritative and one that lacks it is not (Br. 1-4-7).

Note:—Mimamsakas hold that only "imperative sentences" found in the Vedas are Pramana Vakyas. They are the commands of the Vedas to perform something or abstain from other

things. Mere declaratory sentences leave us cold. So they are of no value for our conduct.

According to them, the Upanishads belong to this latter category and as such are not worthy of consideration.

But Sankara asks: Does not Atma Jnana, knowledge of the true nature of one's self, have the great result of destroying ignorance and misery? Are not these results more important than obtaining wealth or going to Heaven?

Do not the Upanishads emphasise the glories of Atman? Do they leave us in any doubt about it? And do not some sentences in the Upanishads convey the purport of the glorious nature of Atman as the sentence in Brahmana portions of the Vedas conveys sense about the purport of the performance of Karmas?

So the test of authority or otherwise of sentences is not their reference to Karma. But the tests are two: Do they convey clear and indubitable ideas? Do they convey that a result can be achieved by their knowledge? Then they are to be accepted, whether they relate to Karma or are mere statements of reality.

This dictum of Sankara comprehends Karma also in its wide bosom, while it brings in the Upanishads as a serious matter for discussion and understanding. Sankara, as usual, is all-inclusive and not destructive. He comes to fulfil and not to destroy.

Because of the limited definition of Pramana Vakyas, the Upanishads were necessarily excluded from consideration and interpretation by the Mimamsakas. So it was left to the Vedantins to interpret the portion thus excluded. Hence, the Uttara Mimamsa had to come into existence.

Sankara in the definition given here has improved on that of the Mimamsakas as it includes also the subject matter of

Karma Kanda. For Sankara both Karma Kanda and *Jnana* Kanda have a definite place in the evolution of man, each serving a purpose of its own.

१३ए. वस्तुप्रतिपादनं तत्परत्वं सिद्धं शास्त्राणाम् ।

13A. It is established that the Vedas delineate the nature of reality and they have it as their ultimate aim (Br. 1-3-1).

१३बी. शास्त्रादिदमेव भवति, इदं इष्टसाधनं, इदं अनिष्टसाधनं इति साध्यसाधनसंबन्धविशेषाभिव्यक्तिः ।

13B. The Scriptures only do this much; they point out or reveal what leads to good and what leads to evil, thereby indicating the particular relationships that subsist between the various ends and their appropriate means (Br. 2-1-20).

Note:—Here Sankara gives the new viewpoint to the commands of Karma Kanda. The various Vedic commands too are brought into line with the dictum that the Vedas are mere statement revealing truth. These so-called commands, in fact, reveal the means to obtain various ends.

१४. न अवश्यं तस्य (आगमबलावलम्बिनः) यथादृष्टमेव सर्वं अभ्युपगन्तव्यम् ।

14. It is not necessary for one whose strength is reliance on Scriptures that he should accept all things perceived by the senses as real (S.B. II-2-38).

Note:—Vedic truths or dicta have, as their source, the superconscious experience of Rishis. These truths relate to a sphere of existence beyond sense experience and reason. Ordinary experience tells us that all men and things are entirely separate from one another: the Vedas say सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म (all different things are in truth Brahman). This is so astounding a statement that man finds it difficult to believe and accept it as it flatly contradicts his ordinary experience.

But what has to be remembered here is that the Vedic dictum does not speak of ordinary sense-experience. An adher-

ent of the Vedas need not and should not be shocked at such a statement contradicting the senses.

According to Sankara there are not many such dicta in the Vedas. The one quoted above is the most important; a variation of it is जीवो ब्रह्मैवनापर: (Jiva indeed is Brahman and not different from it). The Christians, why, even the Dvaitis among the Hindus, consider the statement as blasphemous.

There can be unity of all in spite of and even in the face of staring multiplicity. Are not the leaves, twigs and branches of a tree, one with the tree? Certainly leaves are different from each other. Leaves are different from twigs and branches; yet, in spite of these differences, they all come in, in the correct conception of the tree. In spite of the multiplicity, the tree includes them all. So too, Brahman includes all. But any analogy, however helpful, is too feeble to express a Vedic Truth.

It must be sadly confessed here that, in spite of a great touch-stone furnished by Sankara for testing the worth of Sastras, many customs repugnant to our ethical sense are being upheld as part of the Sastras on the strength of No. 14. It is an abuse of this saying to state that certain religious texts give sanction for practices like untouchability, exclusion of certain castes and people from temples in India (as of Negroes from schools in America), prohibition of marriage outside caste and many morally repulsive rituals like goat-sacrifice at Kali temples. These all have the sanction of religious texts! The customs are upheld on the ground that these religious texts have their sanction from spheres beyond senses and have to be accepted and followed even though they may seem repugnant.

This is a most flagrant abuse of religious texts. Even some vital propositions of the sages Kapila and Patanjali were rejected by the all-inclusive Sankara as those parts of their teachings contradicted the Great Truth of the Unity of all.

The sage Kapila has systematised Hindu metaphysical thought, specially the higher psychology in his Sankhya Darsana. The sage Patanjali is the author of the Yoga Darsana, the most authoritative treatise on what may be termed applied higher psychology of the Hindus. These Darsanas are two out of the six famous Hindu Darsanas. Both the systems accept the plurality of souls, in spite of their acceptance of the soul's capacity for infinite perfection. Sankara's remark about sage Kapila (S.B. 2-1-1) in spite of the great deference paid to him, is: 'कपिलो हि न सर्वात्मदर्शनं अनुमन्यते अतः कपिलतन्त्रं वेदविरुद्धम्" "Kapila does not deduce or allow for the great truth that the One Atman pervades all. So the treatise of Kapila is contrary to the Vedas." So Sankara, even though all-inclusive, unhesitatingly rejects the conclusion of sage Kapila about the plurality of souls, while accepting the great technique evolved by the sage in his treatise. Similarly, while accepting practically the whole of the Yoga Sutra as a guide for religious practice, Sankara rejects Patanjali's proposition of plurality of souls: "एतेन योगः प्रत्युक्तः" "So Yoga is refuted" (S.B. II-1-3).

Here is a great lesson for the modern world. The one great Truth of the Upanishads, the supreme unity of All (see No. 264) should be the Mantra of the whole world. The basis of all ethics is this great truth. All our faith and action should be on this basis. This is the touch-stone on which the truth or otherwise of religious practices mentioned in the Sastras has to be tested. Similarly, very many of the beliefs and practices found in the so-called religious texts have to be discarded in so far as they militate against the principle "unity of all" and ethics. Only such of the teachings as are not contrary to "unity of all" and ethics alone in the text books may be accepted and followed. The abuse of the saying given above should not be allowed but guarded against.

१५. ज्ञापकं हि शास्त्रं न तु कारकं इति स्थितिः ।

15. Indeed it is an accepted principle that Scriptures are only informatory (revealing truths) and not mandatory (issuing commands) (Br. 1-4-10).

Note:—Scriptures like other sciences reveal to us truths which we did not know. This is what is meant by 'informative' or 'revelatory'. They do not create a truth nor do they compel us to do something or prohibit us from doing some other thing. There are Acharyas who have attempted the interpretation of the Vedic texts. Jaimini is a prominent and early interpreter. The sheet-anchor of his school of thought is that the Vedas teach us about rituals, a knowledge of which is not gained by us instinctively or from our sense experience or reasoning. The vital sentences of the Vedas are the "commands" found in the Brahmana portion of the Vedas or the various Vidhi Vakyas, injunctions to do rituals. The other simple declaratory sentences in the Vedas are known as Arthavadas or Vidhi Seshas (supplements to commands). These often take the form of panegyrics. These latter are useful as throwing further light on the Vidhi Vakya as to the materials to be used in the yajnas, the deities to be propitiated, the nature of the offering, etc. Because of this view, Jaimini's interpretation of the Vedas excludes the Upanishads. In his view, the Upanishads are Arthavadas relating to Atman (S.B. 3-4-2). Unless Atman is there to enjoy the fruits of sacrifices after death in heaven, people may not take to sacrifices at all. No more value need be attached to the Upanishads. The Upanishads are thus brushed aside by Jaimini. Sankara accepts the principle of the division of sentences into two classes : (1) Vidhi Vakyas (vital sentences) and (2) Arthavadas (Vakya Seshas or supplementary sentences). But he extends the scope of the vital sentences here—see No. 12. Statements of truths regarding the superconscious state, which contribute to bring great blessings to man, are also vital sentences. These too, like the statements relating to rituals, are not known to us by instinct or from sense-knowledge or reason. But a

knowledge of these has an important bearing and influence on our life. So these statements (not commands) are also valid Vedic sentences—see No. 12. Sankara goes a step further—see No. 13 B—and affirms that the imperative sentences (Vidhis) can also be viewed as mere statements of the means to gain certain ends, say, to go to heaven after death or to obtain other blessings like wealth or children. This dictum of Sankara, No. 12, along with some others, makes the Vedas one of the sciences. Science also reveals truths unknown to us before, but they relate to the physical world. Similarly, Sankara makes the Vedas the science that reveals to us the supersensuous truths (see No. 9). "Not creative"—the Vedas do not create a truth. In them truths are recorded.

१६. प्रमाणभूतायाः श्रुतेः पुरुषस्य इव व्याजानुपपत्तेः ।

16. Sruti being a trustworthy authority cannot have recourse to subterfuge like a man (Br. 4-4-7).

Note :—Man is swayed by his passions; his statements are thereby vitiated and stray from truth. But Vedic records are not born in an atmosphere of passion and are therefore trustworthy.

१७. वेदस्य हि निरपेक्षं स्वार्थे प्रामाण्यं, रवेरिव रूपविषये ।

17. Indeed, in their own sphere, the Vedas have independent authority and need no other support just as the Sun (requires no other aid) in the sphere of forms (S.B. 2-1-1).

Note :—As the sun reveals forms and no further aid is required to reveal forms, so the Vedas without any other help reveal supersensuous truths. According to Sankara, the Upanishads contain only one truth "Atman is Brahman." Neither senses nor reason can serve to bring this truth to man. Sruti is quite independent of reason and that alone has to be accepted as our authority for the grand declaration—see No. 4.

१८. पुरुषार्थोपदेशत्वात् श्रुतीनाम् ।

18. Srutis reveal the means to attain the various ends of man (Tai. 1-11).

Note :—Man feels the want for many things other than God-realisation or self-realisation. Karma Kanda supplies these other needs of man. Man may resort to them if he has sufficient faith in them or thinks them worth having—see No. 13 B.

Limitations of Sabda Pramana (Veda)

१९. न पारमार्थिकं वस्तु कर्तुं निवर्तयितुं वा अर्हति ब्रह्मविद्या ।

19. Self-realisation (through the practice of Brahma Vidya) does not create the Supreme Reality nor does it alter it.

Note :—Brahma Vidya, realisation that Atman is Brahman, is the most valuable asset of man. But by realisation Brahmanhood of Atman is not created nor Atman's nature altered. Weaving creates cloth. Polishing makes a brass plate shine and thus alters the dull appearance of the plate. On the other hand, realisation, i.e. Brahma Vidya does not create something new or in any way alter the nature of the Atman.

२०. न हि प्रत्यक्षविरोधे श्रुतेः प्रामाण्यम् । न हि श्रुतिशतमपि शीतोऽग्निः अप्रकाशः इति ब्रुवत् प्रामाण्यं उपैति ।

20. Certainly Sruti (Veda) cannot be an authority as against observed facts. Even if hundreds of Vedic texts declare that fire is cold and devoid of light, they cannot become an authority on this point (G. 18-66).

Note :—Here Sankara shows the limitation of the Vedas or Sastras. They are not meant to cross their boundary of the super-conscious and come down and offer remarks about the sense world and on results of reason.

२१. श्रुतेः ज्ञापकत्वात्, न शास्त्रं पदार्थान अन्यथाकर्तुं प्रवृत्तं किं तर्हि यथाभूतानां अज्ञातानां ज्ञापने ।

21. Sruti is merely informative; the Scriptures seek not to alter the nature of things but to supply information about things unknown, as they are (Br. II-20).

Note :—The idea given in No. 19 is expressed in other words here.

२२. न च वचनं वस्तुनः सामर्थ्यजनकम् ।

22. Nor can a Scriptural statement impart any power to a thing (Br. 1-4-10).

२३. न च वचनात् आरभ्योऽपि नित्य एव ।

23. Even a Vedic sentence cannot state that "one with a beginning is eternal." (Tai. 1-11).

२४. न तु शास्त्रं भृत्यानिव बलात् निवर्तयति नियोजयति वा ।

24. But the Scriptures neither hinder nor direct a person by force as if he were a servant (Br. II-1-20).

Note :—This brings out the implications of No. 15 more explicitly that Vedas are not a "Command of the Lord" that can be disobeyed without impunity.

२५. दृश्यते हि पुरुषाः रागादिगौरवात् शास्त्रं अतिक्रामन्तः ।

25. We see that people disobey even the Scriptures because of excess of attachment, etc. (Br. II-1-20).

Note :—The idea of some schools on Karma Kanda is that Veda Vidhis are like the orders of an imperial lord whose commands cannot be disobeyed with impunity. Sankara holds that they are not like the commands of a lord.

२६. पुरुषाः स्वयमेव यथारुचि साधनाविशेषेषु प्रवर्तन्ते । शास्त्रं तु सवितृ-
प्रकाशवत् उदास्त एव ।

26. People of their own accord, guided by their own taste, adopt particular means. The Scriptures remain simply neutral like sunlight for instance (Br. II-1-20).

Note :—This again elaborates the idea in Nos. 15 and 24. This, however, brings out the meaning of Sankara more clearly. All Vedic commands are only optional. If the ends are desired by man, the appropriate Vedic Karma may be done. It is entirely left to man to choose any Karma, if it is of value to him.

How Impersonal and Eternal

Both the schools of Jaimini and Sankara hold that the Vedas are impersonal and eternal, but from altogether different viewpoints. Jaiminiyas hold there is no personality connected with the Vedas as their discoverer, but that they have been handed down from generation to generation and will be so continued.

But Sankara holds that the connection of the Vedas with mortal personalities like the Rishis does not mar the eternal nature of the Vedas. According to him the Vedas are the records of truths seen and experienced by Rishis by transcending their senses and mind and by raising themselves to the superconscious plane. As records of truths of the superconscious, the Vedas are impersonal and eternal. These truths existed even before the times of the Rishis and would continue to exist even after their death.

Thus Sankara's explanation is certainly more comprehensible, as his idea accords with those of modern scientific truths. Vedic truths, however, relate to higher levels. This is explained further in the notes coming in this section.

२७. अस्माकं अप्रत्यक्षमपि चिरंतनानां प्रत्यक्षम् ।

27. Even things not within the ken of our perception were matters of direct perception to our forefathers (Rishis) (S.B. 1-3-3).

Note :—The Vedic truths, though not within our ken, were within the ken of Rishis of old. They discovered them as Einstein did the Law of Relativity.

२८. मन एव केवलं रूपज्ञाननिमित्तं योगिनाम् ।

28. In the case of Yogis the mind alone is the cause of perception of forms, etc. (B. I-42).

Note :—Without any instrument other than their own minds, highly purified, refined and made subtle by Yoga, without the aid of eyes, the Yogis can see. They saw truth similarly.

२९. न वस्तुयाथार्थ्यंज्ञानं पुरुषबुद्ध्यपेक्षम् । वस्तुतन्त्रमेवतत् ।

29. Perception of the true nature of reality is not a product of man's intellect. It depends on the nature of the object (in search) (S.B. I-1-2).

Note :—The perception of the reality of a thing is an insight. It is not the activity of imagination as in the case of a poem by a gifted poet. The Law of Gravity existed even before Newton discovered it. The still more universal Law of Relativity existed before Einstein and will continue to operate. Their mind saw these in their reality. They are not the work of their imagination or ingenuity of mind as a poem or a Radar is. Similar is the relation of Rishis to the Vedas. The truths existed even before they saw and recorded them and they will continue to exist. So they are eternal. They have nothing to do with the discoverer. They are impersonal. This view of the Vedas given by Sankara accords with our ideas of scientific truths.

३०. आकृतिभिश्च शब्दानां संबन्धो न व्यक्तिभिः, आकृतीनां च नित्यत्वम् ।

30. Words indicate not units or individuals but the genus. The genus is eternal. (The Vedas state general propositions and not particular events or things). (S.B. 1-3-28).

Note :—This further clarifies the idea of this section. The Vedas deal with laws and not with individual facts. Thus they are impersonal and eternal.

Understanding of the Meaning of Vedas Essential

The practice of only learning the Vedas by rote and not caring to know their meaning is almost universally prevalent

among the Vedic scholars. This practice is not approved of in No. 32. It is also the belief amongst these scholars that mere recitation of these Vedas without knowing their meaning is a highly meritorious act. It is supposed to have Adrishta Phala (unseen effect). This belief is not supported by Sankara (see Nos. 31, 33, 34). Belief by itself has wonderful influence on man. Belief, the incentive to action, produces results undoubtedly. Sankara holds that the Vedas have to be understood if right actions are to follow. If meaning was not necessary, why the Veda Bhashyas, and Jaimini and Vyasa Sutras and the numerous commentaries on these works? Nos. 35 to 39 deal generally with the construing of sentences, inclusive of Vedic sentences. So they are a part of "Mimamsa." As the Jaimini Sutras came to be called Purva Mimamsa, Vyasa Sutras when they came to be framed later were called Uttara Mimamsa, Mimamsas born later (see notes to No. 12).

३१. अविपरीतार्थप्रतिपत्तेः श्रेयः प्राप्त्युपपत्तेः, लोकवत् ।

31. As in common life, (in Scriptural matters also) it is but proper that not an incorrect understanding leads to welfare (Br. I-3-1).

३२. दृष्टार्थत्वात् अध्ययनं अर्थावबोधपर्यन्तं इति स्थितिः ।

32. Study by rote has a "seen" purpose. It is an agreed canon that it ends only with a comprehension of the meaning (of the passage) (S.B. III-4-6).

३३. न शब्दमात्रं अर्थस्वरूपं संभवति शब्दार्थयोर्भेदात् ।

33. The mere sound of the word does not constitute the object in its reality. The word is different from the object which it denotes (Br. I-4-10).

३४. अविपरीतबोधात् श्रेयःप्राप्तेः विपर्यये च अनिष्टप्राप्तिदर्शनात् ।

34. Correct comprehension (of the Vedas) leads to well-being, and erroneous notions, as we find, lead to evil (Br. I-3-8).

३५. न ह्यसत्यपि संभवे मुख्यस्यैवार्थस्य ग्रहणं इति कश्चित् आज्ञापयिता विद्यते ।

35. Indeed when literal meaning is inappropriate, no authority enjoins that literal meaning alone should be accepted (S.B IV-3-14).

३६. तत्र हि गौणी कल्पना शब्दस्य यत्र मुख्यार्थो न संभवति ।

36. Where literal meaning does not fit in, then alone the metaphorical meaning is to be adopted (Pra. VI-3).

३७. अन्यनिन्दा अन्यस्तुतये ।

37. The criticism of one serves as a tribute to another (Br. I-4-6).

३८. श्रुतहान्य श्रुतकल्पनायाः अन्याय्यत्वात् ।

38. It is unreasonable to give up the plain meaning of words used in Sruti and put new meaning in their place (Br. I-4-10).

३९. निश्चितं न ज्ञानं पुरुषार्थसाधनमिष्यते । अतोऽसंशितो वाक्यार्थो वाच्य परहितार्थिना ।

39. And sure knowledge leads to the supreme end of human life, viz., liberation. Hence one who wishes to do good to others should not use expressions of a doubtful import.

४०. क्रियायामिव वस्तुनि विकल्पस्य असंभवात् ।

40. There cannot be alternatives in truth as in rituals or actions.

Note :—In rituals there may be two or more alternatives. Taking the observance of Ekadasi fast (fast on the 11th day after Full moon or New moon), for instance, one sect observes it on the day when Ekadasi touches Dasami (tenth day), other sects observe it on the day Ekadasi touches Dwadasi (twelfth day). So far as rituals are concerned, both the alternatives are correct and approved. But in truth there cannot be any alternative. 7+3=10 and 10 alone. In the same way, ignorance can be removed only by truth, and not by anything else such as Karma.

४१. पुरुषाभिप्रायतन्त्रौ अर्थानर्थौ ।

41. Good and evil are not absolute, but depend on each one's opinion (Br. II-1-20).

Note :—For a Rockfeller 100,000 dollars are nothing. But the same 100,000 dollars are a big fortune for a poor man.

Arthavada

The great contribution of Jaimini in the field of interpretation of Vedic texts is the sifting of the grain from the chaff. The grain is the Vakya (the Sentence) and the chaff is called Arthavada (Subsidiary Sentence). Jaimini's dictum about Arthavada is :

विधिना एकवाक्यत्वात् स्तुत्यर्थासन्तो, न पार्थगर्थ्येन प्रमाणम् ।

"Arthavadas have to be construed as integral in sense with the Vidhi, being meant to eulogise it, etc. Arthavadas do not convey an import of their own." Jaimini has rated the Mantra portion and the Upanishad portion of the Vedas as mere Arthavadas and as such they did not deserve to receive any further attention from him. Sankara has tacitly agreed with Jaimini in regard to his assessment of the Mantra portion as being प्रयोग शेषा: (utterances to be used while offerings are being made).

But Sankara emphatically repudiates Jaimini's estimate of the Upanishads as Arthavadas. Sankara asserts that the Upanishads convey an import of their own; the most important one in the whole body of the Vedas.

But except for this important disagreement mentioned above, Sankara fully upholds the proportion about Arthavada and uses it in the interpretation of the Upanishadic passages. Wherever stories occur in the Upanishads he always prefaces them as follows :

४२ए. सुखावबोधार्थं अख्यायिका लोकवत् ।

42A. The stories (in the Scriptures) serve as a means of easily impressing ideas on others as in common life (Ait. Intr. II).

Note :—Stories are introduced in Scriptures not as historical facts but for better understanding of an abstruse point or subject.

४२बी. विद्या ग्रहण संप्रदान विधिप्रदर्शनार्थत्वं। विद्या स्तुतये, राजसेवितम् पानीयमितिवत्। त्रैलोक्य राज्यात् गुरुतरो विद्येति।

42 B. This story serves the purpose of showing how Vidya is to be received and how it is to be imparted. It glorifies the Vidya, as the statement about a glass of water, that this is the one which the king uses to drink. The result of this Vidya is far superior to overlordship of the three worlds (Cha. 8-6-2).

४२सी. विद्या स्तुतये; एवं किल एतत् इन्द्रत्वात् अपि गुरुतरं इन्द्रेणापि महत यत्नेन एकोत्तरवर्षशतेन कृतायासेन प्राप्तं आत्मज्ञानम्।

42 C. This story is in praise of (Brahma) Vidya. This is the immense value of Self-realisation; it is considered superior to Indrahood by Indra himself, because he won this Self-realisation with mighty effort for 101 long years (Cha. 8-11-3).

४२डी. पूर्वपक्षसिद्धान्ताख्यायिकारूपेण समर्प्यमाणो अर्थं श्रोतुः चित्तमाप्नोति विपर्ययेहि तर्कशास्त्रवत् केवलमर्थानुगम वाक्यैः समर्प्यमाणो दुर्विज्ञेयः स्यात् अत्यन्त सूक्ष्मत्वात् वस्तुनः।

42 D. If a subject is presented in the form of a story giving questions and answers it easily enters the mind of the hearer; otherwise if it is presented as if it were a lesson in logic in a few significant sentences, the subject matter being very subtle, becomes difficult of comprehension (Br. II Intro.)

Note :—The reference in B and C is to the story of Indra and Virochana approaching Prajapati for being instructed in Brahma Vidya; D refers to the discussion between Yajnavalkya and his wife Maitreyi.

The implication that Sankara wants to convey by these explicit statements of caution about the stories, is that the reader

or the hearer of these stories should comprehend their moral. Their mind should not confuse these as narrations of historical incidents.

Itihasa and Purana

४३. इतिहास पुराणमपि मन्त्रार्थवादमूलत्वात् व्याख्यातमार्गैः संभाव्येत् ।

43. Itihasa and Purana have their basis in Mantras and Arthavadas. The explanations given above hold good in their cases also (S.B. 1-3-33).

Note :—So they should not be taken at their face value. The stories in Puranas are not given as historical facts. They are told to emphasise great truths and the importance of virtuous conduct, as these serve for the easy comprehension of these subtle but magnificent truths.

Here Sankara agrees fully with Jaimini about the great propositions regarding the interpretation of religious texts. This, though agreed to and applied by both, is being woefully forgotten by modern readers of Puranas and Itihasas. A lot of confusion in the religious world is due to the wrong emphasis given to these Arthavadas as if they are historical facts. Here the grain alone has to be gathered and preserved even though the chaff too was born along with the grain.

Moral of Akhyayikas (Stories)

४४ए. विधि प्रतिषेधार्थेन शास्त्रेण आकृतार्थत्वं आत्मज्ञानमन्तरेण
इति आख्यायिका प्रपञ्चयाति ।

44 A. Without (attaining) Atma Jnana (Realisation of the Self) one cannot attain (mental) satisfaction of having done one's duty merely by the scrupulous adherence to the dictates of Karma Kanda to do or to refrain. This is the import conveyed by this story (K. I. 20. Intro.).

Note :—The reference here is to the background to the nature of the third boon of Nachiketas. Yama has assured

Nachiketas of a happy home by the first boon. All heavenly comfort and joys have been assured by the new sacrifice called after Nachiketas. Yet he has a firm conviction that these two alone cannot ensure Eternal Peace. Only Self-realisation can confer that. So his third boon, seeking and persisting to know about Self-realisation.

४४बी. श्रद्धा च ब्रह्मविज्ञाने परमं साधनं इत्याख्यायिकार्थ : ।

44 B. The moral of the story is that faith also is one of the supreme factors in attaining Brahman (Br. II. Intro.).

Note :—The reference here is to the long conversation between the Brahmin Gargya and the king Ajatasatru. Gargya goes in great confidence to the other to teach him about Brahman. But Gargya teaches about what he regards the various deities behind the Sun, Moon, etc. Ajatasatru, who knows that the One Vital Principle in all these is Brahman, tells Gargya that he has to know better about the subject. The latter at once, in his eagerness to know the truth, requests the king to accept him as a disciple. This comment of Sankara's may be remembered with great profit while reading the Puranas.

४४सी. अधुना श्रुतिः स्ववचनेन आख्यायिका निर्वृत्तं अर्थमाचष्टे ।

44C. Now the Veda itself, in its own words, tells us the purport meant to be conveyed by the story.

४५ए. सर्व वेदान्तेषु उत्पत्तिस्थिति त्यादि कल्पना न तत्र प्रत्यय करणाय ।

45A. The narration of stories about the creation, sustenance and dissolution that is met with in the Upanishads, is not primarily meant to convey the correct ideas about these (Br. 2-1-20).

४५बी. नह्ययं सकलः कथाप्रबन्धो विवक्षितः इति शक्यते वक्तुम्, तत्र प्रतिपत्तौ पुरुषार्थाभावात् ।

45B. It can be safely stated that the purpose of the topic here is not the delineation of the story, for, by understanding it, no purpose (in life) is to be achieved (S.B. III—3:9).

Note :—One has to remember here Sankara's dictum: निश्चितफलवत् विज्ञानोत्पादकम् वाक्यं प्रमाणम् । (Br. 1-4-7.) "For a sentence to be accepted as authoritative it has to indicate a fruitful knowledge." No fruit is stated here to accrue from the understanding of these. So these are mere Arthavadas; they are to subserve some other purpose meant to be conveyed by the Veda. If other Pramanas (perception or reasoning) will support these passages they may be accepted; but if these passages are in conflict with the other Pramanas, their import need not be accepted at their face value. So if there is no improbability they may be accepted as true; otherwise only the moral conveyed by them need be accepted.

Puranas are valuable mainly for their high moral import; their basis may be or may not be historical; their value is not in the least detracted even if they have no basis in history.

Nos. 245 to 251 may also very appropriately find their place here. According to Sankara, Atman is an axiomatic Truth. It is only on the basis of the existence of the Atman that all enquiries begin. What are the functions of the Scriptures then? To dispel the mists surrounding the Atman, and to suggest means to clear them. Whenever we refer to 'I' we are referring to the Atman; so we know the Atman faintly but not clearly, whenever we utter the word 'I'. Sastras make this Atman clear to us.

CHAPTER II

KARMA (PRIMARY RITUALS)

Introduction

The popular idea of religion begins and ends with the performance of rituals and ceremonies. This is supported by the fact that more than 90 per cent of the Vedas deal with the various factors of the innumerable rituals. Man is by his very nature eager to ward off adversity and bring about prosperity. When he feels powerless by himself, he seeks the help of higher powers or God. Hence the origin of rituals (rites meant to appease and propitiate gods to win their favour). Often the exclusive attention to these so blinds its votaries that they forget the more important aspects of religion, namely, service to fellow creatures, ethical conduct and meditation. Their importance should be properly recognised and they should play a greater part in religion.

With most, the attachment to rituals is strong, because they have been instructed from youth that these have issued from the commandments of God, any default of which will entail condign punishment.

Jaimini's prescription for Moksha

Acharya Jaimini is the father of the science of interpretations of texts (Mimamsa) and applies his science to the interpretation of the Vedas. His book on Vedic interpretations consists of over 2000 Sutras and is called Purva Mimamsa or simply Mimamsa. The word "Mimamsa" means desire to measure and in Purva Mimamsa the Vedic sentences have been measured or interpreted. The Vedic Karmas have been divided into four categories: Nitya, Naimittika, Kamya and Pratishiddha.

Nitya Karmas have been ordained to be performed every day as long as life lasts, e.g. "Agnihotra is to be performed as

long as life lasts". Agnihotra is the typical Nitya Karma. But the Vedas do not make mention of any Phala (fruit) for this. So it cannot have any fruit. Yet, as it is an imperative command of the Vedas. it cannot be given up. If it is given up, it becomes an offence against the mandate of the Vedas and will entail Pratyavaya (serious evil consequences). How can a servant) disobey his master's order and go scot-free?

Thus the three essential features of Nitya Karma are : (1) it is to be compulsorily performed daily; (2) it does not confer any fruit as Kamya Karmas do; (3) its non-performance will entail Pratyavaya.

Sankara, as will be seen from this chapter, seeks to repudiate all these three features of Nitya Karma.

Naimittika Karmas are sacrifices to be performed on special occasions like the full moon, new moon, eclipses, etc.

Kamya Karmas are sacrifices to be performed to achieve special desires like the birth of a son, etc.

Pratishiddha Karmas are prohibited actions, the performance of which will produce evil, say hell or birth as animals, etc.

Now we are furnished with a chart to attain the highest end of man, Parama Purushartha, according to Mimamsa. The chart prescribes :—

1. Do not do Pratishiddha Karma for it will bring about Papa Janmas (evil births).
2. Do not perform Kamya Karma for it will bring about Punya Janmas (good births).
3. Do Nitya Karmas without fail in order that Pratyavaya (untoward evil results) may be avoided.

Thus, having blocked the cause of birth in hell or heaven, as also the generation of any unthought-of evil, the way has been paved for the attainment of Moksha in the most easy

manner without any further effort than the performance of Nitya Karma. This is the scheme of Moksha according to the Mimamsakas. Here it will be found that performance of Nitya Karma prescribed by the Vedas is the corner-stone of this scheme. Agnihotra (Fire-rite) is the typical Nitya Karma.

Why the Topic of Nitya Karma Now-a-days?

Jaimini's view on Nitya Karma was most prevalent in the days of Sankara. Its evil effect was that, in the meticulous attention devoted to the performance of Nitya Karma, the importance of ethical conduct, the necessity for detachment even while doing Karmas and the essential place of meditation in the scheme of self-realisation were being ignored by the self-satisfied religious people; nay, the importance of self-realisation was forgotten. The existence of the Upanishads had clean gone out of their minds as Jaimini had not recognised them.

This was a travesty of the magnificence of the Hindu spiritual thought. As a matter of fact, the spiritual ignorance was confounded for spiritual light; a worse tragedy could not happen to the Vedic way of life. Sankara's most mighty effort was to expose this ignorance about right and true Vedic way of life, and show the right spiritual way as expounded in the Upanishads, the crown of Vedic literature. The conversion of Mandana Mishra was the crowning achievement in this line of his efforts.

In the commentaries on each of the Upanishads we find him taking up this topic of wrong ideas about Nitya Karma so largely prevalent in his day and which were brought about by the compulsory preliminary study of Mimamsa by the literate class and their exposition of it to the non-literate public. We find this vehement attack and exposure of wrong ideas about Nitya Karma in his commentaries on the Gita. The commentary on the fourth Sutra of the Brahma Sutras is a mighty and most sustained scientific attack on the importance attributed to

Karmas as such in the scheme of self-realisation. This constitutes a thorough exposure of Jaimini's Siddhanta that proper Karma alone by itself will lead to the height of Divine bliss.

From what has been described above, Sankara's strictures on Karma and the wrong ideas centering around Nitya Karma might be taken to have only a topical interest. To-day the typical Nitya Karma called Agnihotra is conspicuous by its absence even among the orthodox Brahmins. Why should it be remembered now when even the Brahmins have no ideas about Nitya Karma and much less about the wrong ideas that once centred around it as given in the Mimamsa texts?

Even though the Vedic rituals are much out of use, it cannot be said that rituals have gone out of use. They will never go out of use; only one set of rituals will give place to another, and the ideas about rituals, in the minds of their votaries, are more or less what they were regarding Nitya Karma among the Mimamsakas of Sankara's time, even to this day.

In the early stages of spiritual life all have inevitably to take to rituals of some sort or other. Once they take to them, they cling to them, as if they are the be-all and end-all in religion. They do not see the higher steps in the evolution of religious practices. They do not understand that bondage alone results from the practice of rituals, and not freedom which they unconsciously long for. So it is very important that the implications of even the best of the rituals should be known to men who take to religion with zest. It is well to remember in this connection the saying of Swami Vivekananda, that "it is good to be born in a church but never to die in it."

Sankara gives a very correct idea of the importance of rituals, in his definition of Nitya Karma in No. 102. But he still holds that Karma, to whatever class it belongs, is the child of spiritual ignorance and cannot serve to bring out spiritual light. It is in this light that the topic may be said not to have lost its vital interest for people of modern days as well.

Sankara and the Vedas

According to Sankara, the Vedas reveal the means to an end, which means may be adopted if found necessary, or otherwise left out. This attitude of Sankara on Karma is most revolutionary and emphatic. Not even a sworn rationalist or a rabid Marxist could be more outright than Sankara in the condemnation of rituals as thoroughly **useless for spiritual gain.** Sankara considers them useless only for the supreme aim of man, viz. spiritual attainment. It would be but proper to add in this context that a rationalist or a Marxist equates religion only with the performance of rituals in consonance with the ignorant popular idea. Further, their idea of the universe does not go beyond senses and reason. But Sankara's condemnation of rituals is for quite a different reason. Rituals yield fruits in the form of enjoyment and heaven; but they are inadequate to uplift man spiritually. Man has a far more important and efficient instrument available than rituals, to attain his end.

But all has not been said about Sankara's attitude to Karma. Even though Sankara disparages Karma, he equally recognises the fact of its necessity, nay, its inevitability, in the infancy of spiritual life. It is a psychological necessity which, according to him, has to be outgrown and will be outgrown. Just as Mahatma Gandhi states that he does not disbelieve in idol worship, Sankara says that he does not disbelieve in Karma. For those whose ideas of religion do not rise beyond pleasing the Devas or a personal god for granting their desires, Karmas are inevitable. Children cry for toys and a loving father provides them with toys. Similarly, the Vedas have provided rituals for the spiritually young minds.

The real crown of the Vedas is the Upanishads.

Sankara and Quietism

The word Karma has more senses than one. It means "rituals and the like"; it means also "activity" in general. So

the use of the word Karma has led to great confusion regarding an important teaching of Sankara. His scathing criticism of Karma as perfectly useless has often been misunderstood. He is taken to have advocated quietism or cessation of all activities in general. What he has condemned is Pravritti Karma alone, activities leading the mind outwards away from Atman. Sankara is in no way an advocate of quietism or passivity; his life of most intense activity is itself a sufficient refutation of such a charge. Sankara advocates Nivritti Marga as vehemently as he condemns Pravritti Marga or rituals and the like. He, following the Sastras, calls on us for ceaseless Yatna or effort to conquer the mind and make it turn towards Atman or God. This is Nivritti Karma and the first step to Jnana Nishtha which is dealt with in Chapter IV.

Karma Yoga

Further, following the Sastras, Sankara declares that the fangs of Karma can be extracted and the snake made useful and beneficial. Karma can be turned into Karma Yoga. What was conveived as Pravritti can be made to reverse its direction and be converted into Nivritti Karma. Then Karma of all sorts, instead of causing bondage, results in Chitta Suddhi (purification of mind) which is the first step towards the highest spiritual attainment. An illustration will make the matter clear. A tank often proves a watery grave. But the water, the cause of death, can be conquered by getting into the tank and learning to swim in it. Swimming has to be learnt in the very water which proves to be a grave. Similarly the victory over Karma is to be won while doing Karma. The cause of bondage was not in Karma itself, but in its urge, Kama or desire. So the real enemy of man is not Karma but Kama. Karma originates from Kama and results in bondage. Give up the desire for fruit, do not be affected whether the fruit accrues or not; keep equanimity of mind in success or failure; be unattached, then the first round in the battle is won. That man is clever in action, says the

Gita, who acquires this equanimity in regard to failure or success in action—योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ।

Man performs rituals, not, as many wrongly contend, because he has been enjoined to do them, by the Sastras. Impelled by the desire to gain something good or to avoid something evil but finding no means to come by his aim with the help of the world, he resorts to higher powers. When home remedies fail. the patient resorts to the doctor; when the world will not satisfy man's purpose, he resorts to gods or the God. The Vedas prescribe how to propitiate the God or gods to obtain various desires or ward off various evils. This kind of Karma is called Pravritti Karma. So the Vedas are no more mandatory than a doctor's prescription.

It is the mere rituals of ignorant people that Sankara condemns as useless for their spiritual growth, unless rectified in the meanwhile by Karma Yoga.

Some call the activities of Siddha Purushas (realised souls) Karma Yoga. According to Sankara the activities of such persons do not come within the purview of Sastras at all. Medicines are prescribed for the sick and not for the healthy. Sastra is meant for the unregenerate and not for the realised soul. for the Sadhaka and not the Siddha. So he expressly states in his introduction to Chapter II of the Gita that the activities of Sri Krishna and other such Mahatmas are not comprehended by him under the term Karma.

Pravritti Karma–its urge

In Sastras, Karmas are divided into two groups according to the effect they produce on man. Man is drawn by the senses to outward activities. These cause bondage to man and these are known as Pravritti Karma. There are other activities or efforts for restraining the senses and mind and turning them towards the Self. These constitute Nivritti Karma which effects

purity of mind and selflessness and thus serves to break the bondage of Samsara.

Again Avidya (ignorance) is not ignorance of the world or of sciences or history. It is lack of knowledge of the Atman. Karma Kanda of the Vedas, as already stated, has been interpreted by Acharya Jaimini, in over 2000 Sutras, and later on commentaries have been written on these Sutras. This branch of the Vedas is called Mimamsa or Purva Mimamsa. Mimamsa means measuring or interpretation of sentences.

४६. अविद्वाद्विषयं कर्म ।

46. Karma (action) pertains to the ignorant (Gita XVIII-66).

Note :—Only people who have not grasped the nature of Atman, its purity as well as its native freedom, resort to performance of rituals and other activities. The source of bliss is Atman inside, but they seek for it outside.

४७ए. क्रियाहि नाम सा यत्र वस्तुस्वरूपानिरपेक्षैव चोद्यते पुरुषचित्तव्यापाराधीना च । यथा "यस्यै देवतायै हविर्गृहीतं स्यात् तां मनसा ध्यायेत् वषट्-करिष्यन् । संध्यां मनसा ध्यायेत इति । चोदनातन्त्रा च ।

47A. Karma or Kriya is that in which a (Vedic) injunction operates without any regard to the form or nature of the thing and is dependent on the mental activity or imagination of the person (performing). For instance, "mentally conceive of the Devata to whom the offering is meant, saying 'vashad' as the offering is made." Or "imagine Sandhya as you meditate (on it)." Kriya is dependent on (is born of) Vedic injunction (S.B. 1-1-4).

Note :—This gives a definition of Karma. Karma is created by a Vedic injunction and, but for it, such a Karma will not be thought of by man. Eating, sleeping, walking are natural acts——पूर्व क्रिया. Any Yajna is an अपूर्व क्रिया, not a natural act, but an artificial one created by the Vedas. The question whether

there is a Devata and what its form is in reality is not of importance in Karma. Only the Devata to be propitiated is to be conceived or imagined by the priest. Mimamsakas say the form of the Devata is the very sound of the name concerned. If a Devata has form it will die, as all endowed with forms have destruction. But the Vedas are eternal. So Devata has no form. The priest may imagine it while he offers the oblation to it. Such is the conception of the Mimamsakas.

Sankara does not accept these propositions about Devatas.

Mimamsakas deal only with the interpretation of Karma Kanda as according to them Jnana Kanda of the Vedas needs no interpretation. The school dealing with Karma Kanda is known as Mimamsakas. The other school which saw the necessity to interpret Jnana Kanda is known as Vedantins. Of the six Darsanas, these are the two important ones as they deal directly with the Vedas, while the other four make but an indirect reference to them.

४७बी. विधिप्रतिषेधाश्च अत्र (कर्मणि) अर्थवन्तः स्युः, विकल्पोत्सर्गापवादाश्च ।

47B. Here (in Karma) injunctions (to do) and prohibitions (not to do the same) are (equally) valid, so also options, general rules and exceptions (S.B. 1-1-2).

Note :—There are different schools of practice in regard to the Vedic rituals. Sankara himself gives examples to illustrate this statement about Karma by making reference to these schools.

In the performance of the ritual called Atiratra, one school says, "A sixteenth cup shall not be used." Another school states, "A sixteenth cup also shall be used." According to Mimamsakas, both practices are correct and effective. In another ritual quoted by Sankara the command is, "The offering of the oblation shall take place before sunrise." But another school prohibits "the offering before sunrise." Yet, both are considered effective.

Taking a current practice, Ekadasi (eleventh day after the Full Moon or New Moon) fast is observed on two different days. One school says that the fast shall fall on the day having connection with the tenth day of the moon. Another school holds that fast shall not be on the day having connection with the tenth.

But Truth does not allow of option as in Karma. 7 plus 3 is 10 and not 9 or 11. See saying 40.

४८. कर्मनिमित्तं न शास्त्रकृतं सर्वप्राणिषु दर्शनात् ।

48. The impulse for action does not come from Scriptures because it (action) is seen in all creatures (Cha. II-23).

Note :—Rituals and activities are undertaken to ward off evil and attain good. Even a cow will run towards a man who shows it grass. It will run away from a man who runs towards it with a big stick in hand bawling out threats. These two activities are not due to the Sastras but to the nature of the cow and its instinct. Similarly, even man's resorting to action to attain good and ward off evil is natural to him by his instinct.

This desire is not created by command of the Sastras as some Mimamsakas contend. So, people following the Mimamsakas state they resort to rituals because the Vedas enjoin them. No, says Sankara. Man resorts to Karma attracted by its good results, as the cow resorts to grass. He resorts to it not because of Vedas' call to him but because of the urge of his desire.

Sankara's implication is that non-performance of a Sastra Karma will not entail evil consequences; no command has been disobeyed here as there was no command. Sankara considers his view-point as very vital for the understanding of the Vedas (see No. 15—Note and 96).

४९. प्रागात्मज्ञानात् प्रवृत्त्युपपत्तेः ।

49. Prior to the awakening of self-knowledge, the performance of rites or actions is proper or natural (Br. IV-5-15).

५०. तस्मात्स्वाभाविक्यैव अविद्यया युक्ताय रागादिदोषवते यथाभिमतपुरुषार्थसाधनं कर्म उपदिशत्यग्रे ।

50. Therefore to those that are possessed of natural ignorance and defects such as attachment and aversion, Scriptures first advise the performance of rites calculated to achieve the desired personal ends (Br. V-1-1).

५१. आत्मविशेषानभिज्ञः कर्मफलसंजाततृष्णः श्रद्दधानतया च प्रवर्तते इति सर्वेषां नः प्रत्यक्षम् ।

51. It is the common and direct experience of us all, that people, ignorant of the qualities of the self and prompted by greed for the fruits of action, are performing action with great zest (G. XVIII-2).

५२. कर्त्रादिकारकक्रियाफलभेदप्रत्ययवत्त्वं हि निमित्तं उपादाय कर्मविधयः प्रवृत्ताः तन्निमित्तं च न शास्त्रकृतं, सर्वप्राणिषु दर्शनात् ।

52. Based on differences of ideas such as the actor, factors of action, action itself, its results, etc., the Vedic injunctions on rites operate; this cause of action is not a creation of Sastra because these are seen in all creatures (Ch. II-23).

५३. अविद्याकृतं कर्तृत्वमुपादाय विधिशास्त्रं प्रवर्तिष्यते ।

53. Having recourse to the idea of actorship, the creation of ignorance, the injunctive portions of the Vedas operate (S.B. II-2-40).

Note :—These bring out the full implications of No. 48.

५४. देहाद्यात्मबुद्धिः अविद्वान रागद्वेषादिप्रयुक्तो धर्माधर्मानुष्ठानकृत ।

54. The ignorant man regards his physical body, etc., as his self and, impelled by attachment, hatred and the like, performs righteous and unrighteous deeds (G. XIII-2).

Note :—This gives the definition of the "ignorant" according to Vedanta. That ignorant people resort to Karma is the view of Vedanta.

५५. कामयमानश्च करोति कर्माणि ।

55. One with desires proceeds to action (Tai. I-11).

५६. कामप्रयुक्तत्वात् गार्हस्थ्यस्य ।

56. Householdership is due to the promptings of desire (Ait. Intro).

५७. आचारोपि च धर्मविशेष एव ।

57. Achara (customary acts) also is a species of Dharma (S B. III-1-11).

५८. न च धर्माधर्मयोः स्वरूपफलसाधनादिसमधिगमे, शास्त्रातिरिक्तं कारणं शक्यं संभावयितुम् ।

58. For knowing the right form, fruit and the means, etc. of Dharma and Adharma (meritorious and non-meritorious rites), we cannot conceive of any other source than the Scriptures.

Note :—Sankara here assigns Karma Kanda its right place. While Jaimini brushes aside Upanishads as Arthavadas and feels no necessity to comment on them, Sankara gives its due place to Karma in the scheme of human spiritual evolution. If Vedic rituals have now gone, temple rituals, bhajanas, etc., have come instead. Rituals are inevitable in the early stage of "ignorance."

५९. कर्मनिमित्तं न शास्त्रकृतं सर्वप्राणिषु दर्शनात् ।

59. The prompting for action does not come from the Scriptures because (action) is seen in all creatures (Cha. II-23).

६०. कार्यकरणैः मूर्तैः संश्लेषो मूर्तस्य । स तु क्रियाहेतुर्दृष्टः । नह्यमूर्तः कश्चित क्रियावान् दृश्यते ।

60. We see that an action is caused by the contact of the body and the organs which have form, with something else that has also form. We never see a formless thing active (Br. 4-3-15).

Note :—A man attached highly to body will resort to Karma. For, a man who has identified himself with his body finds it

difficult to conceive of a thing without form, i.e., without body. अव्यक्ताहि गतिर्दुःखम् देहवद्भिरवाप्यते (G. 12-5).

६१, न विधिप्रतिषेधशास्त्रं फलहेतुभ्यां आत्मनोऽन्यत्वदर्शिनो भवति।

61. The injunctions and prohibitions of the Sastras do not apply to him who knows the self as distinct from cause and effect (self is the all to him) (G. 13-2).

Note :—Ideas of doing Karma do not occur to the man of "knowledge" as opposed to the "ignorant."

६२. विधिप्रतिषेधशास्त्रं अविद्वद्विषयं इति सिद्धम् ।

62. The conclusion is that the Sastra of injunctions and prohibitions relates to the sphere of the ignorant (G. 3-Intro.)

६३. अविद्याकामबीजं हि सर्वमेव कर्म ।

63. Indeed Avidya and Kama (Ignorance of self and desire) are the seeds of action (G. 18-66).

६४. शारीरकं वाचिकं मानसं च कर्म श्रुतिस्मृतिसिद्धम् ।

64. Actions, whether to be performed by the body, speech or mind have their sources in Srutis (Vedas) or Smritis (codes of conduct) (S.B. 1-1-4).

Note:—The source of all rituals, physical, oral or mental is Sastra—the Karma Kanda (see notes to 11 and 58). The implication is that the natural activities of man do not come within the purview of Sastra.

Its Limitations

६५. न हि कर्मकाण्डेन पर आत्मा प्रकाश्यते ।

65. The ceremonial portion (of the Vedas) does not reveal anything about the supreme self (Br. 4-4-22).

Note :—This is the vital defect of the Karma Kanda. It does not pretent to deal with Atman. Chemistry is not intended to deal with the subject matter of physics. It is a warning not

to seek for spiritual truths in Karma Kanda. It does not prescribe means to attain Brahman. Its face is turned to Bhoga or enjoyment.

६६. कृतस्य क्षयित्वात् ।

66. Anything created is destructible (Br. 1-4-15).

६७. विधिशास्त्रं तावत् यथाप्राप्तं कर्तृत्वं उपादाय कर्तव्यविशेषं उपदिशति न कर्तृत्वं आत्मनः प्रतिपादयति ।

67. Availing itself of the idea of actorship as it obtains, the portion of the Vedas dealing with injunctions, advises various kinds of Action. But it does not attribute actorship to the Self (S.B. 2-2-40).

Note :—"There must be an actor before there is action or Karma. Therefore the man, i.e. his soul, has actorship. As the Vedas sanction Karma, they also concede the actorship of the soul." Such an argument about the actorship of the soul cannot be logically built up on the mere ground that the Vedas sanction Karmas. That actorship is born of "ignorance" is a proposition of Vedanta—see 69.

६८. न कर्मणोऽस्ति निःश्रेयसः साधनत्वम् ।

68. Works (rites) are not the means to the highest Bliss (Realisation) (G. 18-66).

Note :—That the unfailing performance of Vedic Nitya Karmas (certain rituals to be done daily) confers Moksha is the Siddhanta (firmly established conclusion) of Mimamsakas. Here is an emphatic refutation of that Mimamsa proposition.

६९. सात्विकस्यापि कर्मणो अनात्मवित् साहंकारः कर्ता ।

69. The doer of even a Sattvic action is ignorant of the self and egoistic (G. 13-24).

Note :—A knowledge of the three Gunas, three kinds of the most subtle forces that enter into the composition of the

mind, is assumed here. They are Tamas, Rajas and Sattva. Tamas shows itself in delusion and indolence, Rajas in activity and passion, Sattva in desire for knowledge and Vairagya (dispassion). Sattva is the highest of the Gunas. There is an element of "ignorance" even in Sattvic acts (Gunas have to be transcended for Moksha).

७०. प्रागात्मविज्ञानात् प्रवर्तमानं शास्त्रं अविद्यावद्विषयत्वं नातिवर्तते ।

70. The Sastra that is operative before the dawn of knowledge of the self does not transcend the sphere of Avidya or ignorance (S.B. Intr.).

Note :—Reference here is to Karma Kanda of the Vedas.

७१. नापि ज्ञानस्य कर्मसाहाय्यापेक्षा, अविद्यानिवर्तकत्वेन विरोधात् ।

71. Nor can knowledge require the aid of works, for as one removing Avidya, knowledge is opposed to works (G. XVIII-66).

Note :—Here is one of the fundamental propositions of Sankara and other Advaitins (Monists). "There is one and only one entity in the universe," is the doctrine of the Monists. Multiplicity is only a delusive appearance. They state that soul in its native purity alone exists and is God, and that the world is an imperfect reading of God through the senses. Different from them are the Dvaitins (Dualists). They state that soul, God and world are different and are all equally eternal, uncreated entities. Dvaitins have a soft corner for Nitya Karmas (see note 68) along with knowledge. Here Sankara (also see 211 and 213) contends that Pravritti Karma is of no help to attain realisation. Karma does not remove "ignorance."

७२. न हि तमस्तमसो निवर्तकम् ।

72. Indeed darkness cannot remove darkness (G. XVIII-66).
Note :—This furnishes the reason for 71.

७३. न मोक्षार्थानि कर्माणि इति सिद्धम् ।

73. The conclusion is that works do not lead to liberation (Br. III-Intr.).

Note :—This gives the conclusion to be arrived at from 71 and 72.

७४. कर्तव्येन साध्यश्चेत् मोक्षः अभ्युपगम्यते अनित्य एव स्यात्।

74. If it should be conceded that it is possible to achieve Moksha as the result of an act, then it will be non-eternal (S.B. 1-1-4).

Note :—Read with **66**, if Karma enters the path of Moksha, the conclusion is inevitable that Moksha has an end, and gets destroyed or exhausted like the fruits of good Karma.

Fruits of Karma

७५. शास्त्रविहितविषयः कर्ममार्गः बंधहेतुः।

75. Karma Marga (the path of action) as taught in the Sastras is (also) the cause of bondage (G. XVIII-30).

Note :—Simply because a Karma is prescribed by such a great authority as the Vedas, it does not follow that it has not the evil effect of bondage. It does constitute a block on the way to Moksha. Even good Karmas, done mechanically as prescribed by the Vedas (and without detachment as to the fruits) cause bondage. The positive attitude of detachment is essential for purity. If that is not present, bondage is the result. This is a point to be kept in mind by the Sadhakas regarding the Vedic Karmas. Sankara implies that "Nitya Karma" too produces bondage.

७६. धर्माधर्मयोः फले प्रत्यक्षे सुखदुःखे विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगजन्ये ब्रह्मादिषु स्थावरान्तरेषु प्रसिद्धे।

76. The fruits of meritorious and non-meritorious acts are the palpable pleasure and pain produced by the contact of the senses with the sense-objects and which are well known to all beings from Brahma down to the very ant (S.B. 1-1-4).

Note :—Here the fruit of the highest Karma and lowest Karma and its nature are given. The highest of the approved Karma confers Brahmanhood, the lowest of the disapproved Karma converts one into an immovable thing like a plant. The joys and miseries which are the results of these Karmas respectively are but joys and sorrows produced by contact of the senses with the sense objects and no more. These joys are not of the supersensuous at all, as in the case of bliss of realisation. Far different is the fruit of Jnana from that of Karma.

७७. नान्यत् स्वर्गपश्वादिफलसाधनेभ्यः कर्मभ्योऽस्ति ।

77. Rituals are a means of attaining Swarga, cattle and such other objects of desire, and nothing else (G. II-42).

Note :—Other fruits of Karma are mentioned here.

७८. कामाः सर्वे श्रौतस्मार्तकर्मणां फलानि ।

78. The fruits of actions enjoined in the Srutis (Vedas) and Smritis (codes of action) are but objects of desire (G. II-12).

७९. इहामुत्रफलभोगार्थानि कामहेतुनि कर्माणि ।

79 Action is caused by desire and has for its aim enjoyments of the objects of desires of this world or the next (G. II-16).

८०. अविद्यानिमित्तो हि प्रयोजनस्य भावो न वस्तुधर्मः ।

80. Indeed the utility (of a thing) is due to (our) Avidya. It is not the property of the thing in itself (Ai. Intr.).

Note :—The idea that fruits are derived from outside is born of "ignorance."

८१. पुरुषाभिप्रायतन्त्रौ अर्थानर्थौ ।

81. Good and evil depend on man's sense of values (Br. IV-5-15).

Note :—The value of these fruits is dependent on the opinion of men. Heat gives joy to men of Arctic regions, but heat is intolerable to a man near the Equator.

८२. फलार्थित्वात् सर्वारंभस्य ।

82. Since all undertakings are for the sake of results (Br. 1-4-17).

Note :—The motive of all actions is the desire for the fruit they will confer. Sankara's confirmed opinion is that Nitya Karma too has fruits just like other categories of Karma. Mimamsakas hold that Nitya Karmas have no fruits.

Its opposition to Jnana

८३. बाह्यप्रत्यगात्मप्रवृत्योः विरोधात् ।

83. For the two tendencies—one going outwards and the other devoting itself to the inner self—are contrariwise (Br. 1-6-1).

Note :—They go in opposite directions. In the first the mind is drawn to sense-objects outside. In the other, the mind is drawn inwards towards the self. The movements of the mind in the two are in opposite directions. Karma draws the mind outwards. Jnana inwards. This is the vital psychological distinction between Karma and Jnana. These, in fact, are the characteristics of Pravritti and Nivritti.

८४. कर्मबीजो अविद्याक्षेत्रो ह्यसौ संसारवृक्षः समूलमुद्धर्तव्यः तदुद्धारणे हि पुरुषार्थपरिसमाप्तिः ।

84. The tree of relative (or worldly) existence, has our actions for the seed and ignorance as its field; this tree has to be pulled out by the roots. For in the uprooting of it is the culmination of human achievement (Br. 1-4-7).

८५. यदेव प्रवृत्तिकारणं तदेव निवृत्तिकारणं न भवति ।

85. What causes the bondage cannot itself lead to its cessation (Br. III-2-Intr.).

Note :—These run in opposite directions as shown in 83 note.

८६. अविद्या सर्वात्मानं सन्तं असर्वात्मत्वेन प्रापयति, सा च अविद्या न आत्मनः स्वाभाविको धर्मः ॥

86. Identity with all is represented as separateness by Avidya. But this ignorance is not a natural character of the Self (Br. IV-3-20).

Note :—This gives a better idea of "ignorance." The Self, which in reality comprehends all, feels that it is limited by the body and to the body. But this feeling is not an integral nature of the Self. Hence one can dispel it by Vidya "knowledge" and realise identity with all.

८७. न मोक्षार्थानि कर्माणि इति सिद्धम् ।

87. Therefore it is proved that rituals do not lead to Liberation (Br. III Intr.).

८८. कामप्रवृत्तेः ज्ञानप्रतिकूलता सर्वशास्त्रेषु प्रसिद्धा ।

88. All the Scriptures declare that the impulsion of desire is antagonistic to the realisation (of the Self) (Br. 4-5-15).

Note :—See note to 83.

So Karma to be given up

८९. न, विधिप्रतिषेधशास्त्रं, फलहेतुभ्यां आत्मनोऽन्यत्वदर्शिनो भवति ।

89. The injunctions and prohibitions of Sastra do not apply to him who knows the Self as distinct from cause and effect (G. XIII-2-8).

Note :—Karma Kanda is not useful to those who are convinced that their goal is the realisation of the Self.

९०. शास्त्रविहितविषयः कर्ममार्गः बंधहेतुः ।

90. The path of action as taught in the Sastra, the Karma Marga, is the cause of bondage (G. XVIII-30).

Note :—This is the same as 75. See note to 75.

९१. विविदिषोः अपि सिद्धं पारिव्राज्यम् ।

91. The conclusion is that even the man who but seeks illumination can also renounce (Br. IV-5-15).

Note :—This supplements the idea of 89.

९२. लौकिको वैदिकश्च व्यवहारः उत्पन्नविवेकज्ञानस्य अविद्याकार्यत्वात् अविद्यानिवृत्तौ निवर्तते ।

92. The worldly activities and religious rites being the product of Avidya cease for a man on the dawn of knowledge consequent on cessation of Avidya.

Note :—This explains 89. Why the Jnani drops Karma is stated here.

९३. मोक्षस्य अकार्यत्वात् मुमुक्षोः कर्मानर्थक्यम् ।

93. Moksha (Liberation) being no effect of any act, no action will avail a Mumukshu (seeker after liberation) (G. IV. Intr.).

Note :—This is still another and vital reason for dropping Karma.

९४. सर्वः संसारः क्रियाकारकफललक्षणः सत्वरजस्तम आत्मको अविद्यापरिकल्पितः समूलोऽनर्थः ।

94. The whole of Samsara, manifested as action, instruments of action, the results made up of the three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas and set up by ignorance (Avidya), is an evil, as also its source or root (G. XVIII-41. Intr.).

९५. अविद्यापूर्वकस्य कर्मणो विद्यैव शुभस्याशुभस्य वा क्षयकारणं, न नित्यकर्मानुष्ठानम् ।

95. Knowledge alone can cause the destruction of good and evil deeds caused by ignorance, and not the performance of Nitya Karma (G. XVIII-60).

Note :—That good deeds too are causes of bondage is stated here. Nitya Karma as prescribed by the Vedas is a good work

that will cause bondage and not destroy bondage. Bondage which is caused by "ignorance" can be neutralised and thus destroyed by knowledge only. Nitya Karma too is superfluous, nay dangerous, when one begins practice of ethical culture to destroy "ignorance." The Gita in Chapter XIII—7 to 11 describes this ethical culture. According to Mimamsakas, Nitya Karma should never be given up. Its abandonment will entail Pratyavaya (untoward and undesirable consequences). This school holds that it is performance of Nitya Karma along with giving up Kamya Karma (actions for specific fruit) and Pratishiddha Karma (prohibited act) that forms the easy way to Moksha.

Here we have the evaluation of Karma by Sankara. Even the Karma which is best according to Mimamsakas has to be given up. That mental attitude of a sort of slavery to the injunctions of the eternal Vedas has to be replaced by a new attitude, viz. that the Vedas are revelatory (Jnapaka) and that Nitya Karma too can be given up without offence to God or fear of evil consequences. But the mind cannot be a vacuum. The cultivation of ethical excellences has to be taken up. This alone leads to purity of mind bringing about realisation. See also 97.

Nitya Karma—Incentive not Sastra but Svabhava

९६. इष्टानिष्टप्राप्तिपरिहारार्थिनः तत्प्रेरिताविशेषप्रवृत्तेः नित्यादीनिकर्माणि विधीयन्ते न केवलं शास्त्रनिमित्तमेव ।

96. Nitya Karma (regular rites) is enjoined on those who are in quest of what is good and the avoidance of what is evil. Thus prompted they resort to regular rites. They are not performed solely as having been enjoined by Scriptures (Br. 1-3-1).

Note :—See note to 48.

९७. ननु नित्यानां कर्मणां तु केवलशास्त्रनिमित्तत्वात् अनर्थार्थत्वाभावात् च अभावः न युक्तः इति चेत् न ; अविद्यारागद्वेषवतो विहितत्वात् ।

97. Is it not improper that regular rites (Nitya Karma) which are performed solely as enjoined by Scriptures and (as such) produce no harmful effects, should stop on any account? Not so, for they are enjoined on one who has the defects such as ignorance, attachment and aversion (Br. III-1).

Note :—See note to 95.

९८. तस्मात् स्वाभाविक्यैव अविद्यया युक्ताय रागादिदोषवते यथाभिमत-पुरुषार्थसाधनं कर्म उपदिशत्यग्रे ।

98. Therefore to those who are possessed of natural ignorance and defects such as attachment and aversion, Scriptures first advise the performance of rites calculated to achieve the desired ends (Br. 5-1-1).

Note :—This specifies what sort of persons naturally takes to Karma.

९९. बाह्यविषयरागाद्यपहृतचेतसो न शास्त्रं निवर्तयितुं शक्तम् ।

99. The Scriptures are powerless to hold back those who are lured by attachment, etc., to external objects (Br. 2-1-20).

Note :—Mimamsakas hold that Veda Vidhis (injunctions) have a peculiar power to impel persons to obey them. According to Sankara, natural desire for reward is the incentive to take up Vedic Karma. See Nos. 48 to 56. But according to Mimasakas it is the above-mentioned subtle power of the Vidhis called Bhavana Sakti that draws one to Vedic acts. The statement in No. 99 controverts this as a matter of common experience. Against this experience the theory of subtle power of the Veda Vidhis put forward by Mimamsakas cannot stand.

१००. यद्यपि शास्त्रावगतं नित्यं कर्म तथापि अविद्यावत एव भवति ।

100. Though Nitya Karma is known from (or taught by) the Sastra; even then it is meant only for the ignorant (G. 18-66).

Note :—Nitya Karma, like all other Karmas, is also born of 'ignorance." As others have to be abandoned even according to Mimamsakas (see note on 95) for attainment of Moksha, similarly Nitya Karma, as progeny of Avidya, has to be abandoned to enable one to go higher up.

Urge, as in Other Karmas, is Kama

१०१. न च अग्निहोत्र-दर्शपूर्णमास-चातुर्मास्य-पशुबन्धसोमानां कर्मणां स्वतः काम्यनित्यत्वाविवेकोऽस्ति कर्तृगतेन हि स्वर्गादिकामदोषेण कामार्थता ।

101. Nor are rites such as Agnihotra, the New and Full moon sacrifices, Chaturmasya, Pasubandha and Somayaga intrinsically either rites with material ends or regular rites. They come under the former category only because a man who performs these has the defect of desiring heaven and so forth (Br. I-3-1).

Note :—The essential features of Nitya Karma have been given towards the end of the Introduction to this chapter. Here Sankara analyses the cause of Nitya Karma and says that in this also the incentive is desire. Agnihotra is the typical Nitya Karma. Others are Naimittikas. These are all clubbed together here as Nityas. Sankara says there is nothing in the nature of these Karmas themselves to distinguish them as Nitya or Kamya. Kama is in the mind of the performer of Karma and not in the nature of the sacrifice. The implication here is that in doing the Nitya Karma there is some desire or other in the mind of the performer as in the case of Kamya Karma. As such, the classification is not fully correct if it implies absence of desire in Nitya Karma, which is the contention of Mimamsakas.

Another and more important point is that like Kamya Karmas, Nitya Karmas too may be given up.

Sankara gives in glaring contrast a very reasonable and refreshing definition to Nitya Karma. It bears very important

fruits and so its daily practice yields an abundance of fruits. So it is better man does it daily. The more one does it the better is the yield of fruits.

So the Nitya Karma, acceptable to one, has to be repeated daily.

Sankara thus gives a new viewpoint to the necessity of Nitya Karma. Such a Nitya Karma is Sandhya Vandana.

१०२. न तु निरपेक्षमेव जीवननिमित्तमेव कर्तव्यं कर्म; कानिचित् पुनः पुनः अनुष्ठीयमानानि बहुफलानि कृष्यादिवत् वर्षशतसमाप्तीनि; तदपेक्षया यावज्जीवश्रुतयः।

102. It is not without any consideration and, not solely because one is living, that the regular rites (Nitya Karma) are enjoined for life. They produce increased results when performed again and again like agriculture, etc. Hence in view of this fact, Sruti enjoins life-long rites (Br. IV-5-15).

Note :—That "one is living" is the occasion for doing the Agnihotra. But it is not merely for that reason that this Karma is done. It is like agriculture. Every year man does cultivation, as year after year paddy or wheat is needed by man. One year's cultivation is not expected to last for life. Each year it has to be done to obtain the much-needed grain. Similarly if every day one performs Agnihotra, etc., the more is the fruit for him. It is with this motive of obtaining more fruit as in agriculture that Agnihotra, etc., are prescribed to be done every day all through life The result is not "no fruit" but "more plentiful fruits." Nitya Karma too is done by the performer out of desire for much fruit.

Omission causes no Pratyavaya

१०३. न हि नित्यानां अकरणात् अभावात् प्रत्यावायभावोपपत्तिः। नासतो विद्यते भावः इति वचनात्।

103. Indeed no evil can arise from the non-existence, namely non-performance of a regular rite (Nitya Karma). The (Gita) saying runs thus: "Out of the unreal no real being comes." (G. IV-18).

Note :—Mimamsakas make two statements about Nitya Karma: (1) They bear no fruit. (2) If they are not done, the non-performance entails Pratyavaya (untoward consequences). The first has been negatived by Sankara in 101 and 102 together. In this, he shows the untenability of the second proposition. Modern science tells of conversion of matter and energy. But science also tells us that nothing, energy or matter, can come out of void. The same is said by Sankara in regard to the creation of Phala. Pratyavaya is a fruit though a very undesirable fruit. Non-action is a void. Even an undesirable fruit cannot come out of a void. So people need not be frightened out of their wits by this ghost of Pratyavaya.

१०४. यदि विहिताकरणात् असंभाव्यमपि प्रत्यवायं ब्रूयात् वेदस्तदा अनर्थकरो वेदः अप्रमाणं इत्युक्तं स्यात्, विहितस्य करणाकरणयोः दुःखमात्रफलत्वात् ।

104. If the Vedas should teach what is inconceivable to us, viz. that evil arises from the omission of prescribed duties, it is tantamount to saying that the Vedas are therefore no authority, for performance and non-performance alike would produce only pain (for we know, action also is painful) (G. III. Intr.).

Note :—In this also both the contentions of the Mimamsakas, that there is no fruit in doing Nitya Karma and that its non-performance will entail evil consequences, are dealt with and their absurdity made clear. Agnihotra, though it does not yield any desirable fruit, does cause great inconvenience in its performance; often a lot of smoke arises from the fire and offends the eye and the nose during the performance. So, doing Agnihotra is only a cause for pain. Non-performance too brings

evil in the form of hell. So how nice is Agnihotra! Both its performance and non-performance bring only pain. Will such an act be taken up by man? The Vedas enjoining such an act will not be accepted or respected—a proposition very distasteful to the Mimamsakas who pin all their faith on the Vedas and the Vedas alone.

१०५. तथा च कारकं शास्त्रं न ज्ञापकं इत्यनुपपन्नार्थं कल्पितं स्यात् ।

105. This will lead to the further absurd conclusion that Sastra is mandatory, not indicative (or revelatory), an aim not generated by it (G. III. Intr.).

Note :—Karaka (mandatory) means making one compulsorily do a thing. If not, punishment will ensue. That is how the idea of Pratyavaya (evil consequence on non-performance) comes. The Sastras then become mandatory. This is quite contrary to No. 15.

Nitya Karma has Phala (fruit)

१०६. नित्यानां कर्मणां पुण्यफलत्वश्रुतेः ।

106. The Srutis declare that Nitya Karma produces merit (Punya) as its result (G. 18-16).

Note :—That Nitya Karma has Phala or fruit is diametrically opposite to the views of the Mimamsakas who say it has no fruit.

१०७. अवश्यं हि कृतं कर्म काम्य नित्यं वा स्वं फलं आरभत एव ।

107. Indeed every action must necessarily produce its effect or fruit, whether it be a desire-born rite or regular rite (Nitya Karma) (G. 6. Intr.).

१०८. नित्यस्य च कर्मणो वेदप्रमाणबोध्यत्वात् फलेन भवितव्यं अन्यथा वेदस्य आनर्थक्यप्रसंगात् ।

108. We have also said that Nitya Karma (regular rite) as taught by so great an authority as the Vedas must produce

a result of its own, since, otherwise the Vedas would serve no useful purpose (G. VI. Intr.).

१०९. कथमुच्यते नित्यकर्मणां फलत्यागः यथा वन्ध्यायाः पुत्रत्यागः ?
नैष दोषः नित्यानामपि कर्मणां भगवता फलस्य दृष्टत्वात् ।

109. How is it that the abandoning of the fruits of Nitya Karma is spoken of? It is like speaking of a barren woman abandoning her son. No such objection can be raised here since in the opinion of the Lord even Nitya Karmas have fruits (G. 18-2).

११०. एतत् नित्यानां कर्मणां फलवत्वे भगवद्वचनम् ।

110. These words of the Lord form the authority which declares that Nitya Karma produces fruits (G. 18-9).

Phala within Samsara

१११. न नित्यानां (कर्मणां) संसारविषयफलत्वं इति चेत् न; सर्वं कर्मणां फलं व्याकृतं संसार एवेति ।

Objection:—The fruits of Nitya Karma cannot be within Samsara (the ever-changing Nature).

Reply:—No; the fruits of every Karma fall within the manifested or palpable Samsara only. (Br. Intr. I-1).

Note :—The Phala of Nitya Karma is not eternal joy but only transitory enjoyment, just like that of Kamya Karmas or other Karmas.

११२. उत्पत्याप्तिविकारसंस्काराणां अन्यतामपि नित्यानां कर्मणां फलम् प्रपद्यते ।

112. Any one of the functions of production, attainment, modification and purification will be the result of regular rites also (Br. III-3-1. Intr.).

Note :—The result of action will be any one of the following four :

(a) Production—a pot being created or produced out of clay;

(b) Attainment—a man having no car gets a car. A man in Madras travels and reaches Bombay;

(c) Modification—milk becomes curd; water turns into hydrogen and oxygen;

(d) Purification—a dull gold plate on polishing shines bright—attains a new purity.

११३. अवघातेन व्रीहीणां तुषनिवृत्तौ गम्यमानायां, अग्निहोत्रादिनित्यकर्मकार्या अदृष्टा न कल्प्यते तुषनिवृत्तिः ; तद्वत् अज्ञाननिवृत्तिरपि नित्यकर्मकार्या अदृष्टा न कल्प्यते, ज्ञानेन विरुद्धत्वं कर्मणां अवोचाम ।

113. In the act of husking paddy, no one thinks that the removal of the husk is effected by the unseen magical potency of the daily religious rite, the Agnihotra; similarly we do not attribute the cessation of ignorance to the unseen power of the regular rites. We have repeatedly said that knowledge and work are opposed to each other (Br. 3-3-1. Intr.).

Note :—Another important proposition of Sankara on Vedanta is stated here. (a) That ignorance is dispelled by knowledge is a Drishta Phala, a thing within our experience, now and here, and not afterwards somewhere. The analogy taken here is that of husking paddy. When husking paddy gives rice, nobody will claim that the Agnihotra done by the father of the house, brought out rice from paddy. When things or events are within our experience, we do not bring unseen factors (Adrishta) as the cause of the phenomena. A portion in chemistry is confusing to a student; he then says that he is ignorant of that portion; he thinks deeply of that portion, even seeks the help of the teacher and then he grasps the subject. His ignorance is dispelled now by knowledge. He has a new insight in the matter. Exactly similar is the dispelling of spiritual ignorance by realisation. It is a fact of experience for great souls here and now.

But the contention of Mimamsakas is that performance of Nitya Karma here will give us Mukti after death, as an Adrishta Phala. This is refuted here by Sankara. The greatest citadel of Mimamsakas, their reliance on Nitya Karma for Moksha, is demolished thus by Sankara and by Vedanta. 114 and 115 can be easily understood in the light of this note.

Nitya Karma also to be given up

११४. यद्यपि शास्त्रावगतं नित्यं कर्म तथापि अविद्यावत एव भवति ।

114. Though the Nitya Karma (regular rite) is known from Scriptures, even then it is intended only for the ignorant (G. XVIII-66).

११५. ननु नित्यानां तु केवलशास्त्रनिमित्तत्वात् अनर्थार्थत्वाभावात् च अभावः न युक्तः इति चेत् न : अविद्यारागद्वेषवतो विहितत्वात् ।

115. Is it not improper that regular rites (Nitya Karma) which are performed solely in obedience to the Scriptures and produce no harmful effect should stop on any account? No, for they are enjoined on one who has defects such as ignorance, attachment and aversion (Br. 1-3-1).

११६. यावदात्मज्ञानविरोधाभिमुखं तावदेव कर्मविधयः ।

116. The injunctions about rites are operative only as long as one is averse to put oneself under the discipline for self-knowledge (Br. 4-5-15).

Note :—One clings to rituals as a child clings to a toy. But only tell him the advantages of the knowledge of Self and its means. They grip his mind. Karma Yoga is a great help in this.

Nivritti Karma (Karma Yoga, the turn to Nivritti) destroys bondage

११७. यस्तु अधिकृतः संगं फलाभिसंधिं च त्यक्त्वा नित्यं कर्म करोति तस्य फलरागादिना अकलुषीक्रियमाणं अन्तःकरणं नित्यैश्च कर्मभिः संस्क्रियमाणं विशुद्ध्यति ।

117. When a man feeling qualified for Nitya Karma (regular rites) works without attachment and without longing for results, his mind, unsoiled by desire for results and regenerated by (performance of) the regular acts, becomes pure (G. XVIII-10).

Note :—Nitya Karma, in the light given to it by Mimamsakas, has been rejected, but not the Nitya Karma itself. The Nitya Karma of the Mimamsakas was rituals like Agnihotra. Nitya Karma for Gita and Vedanta includes also the social duties of Varnas (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras). The attitude of mind in the performance of these duties also has to be one of non-attachment. Thus Nitya Karmas are not altogether discarded but taken up and done in a new light for purification of mind. Even these Nitya Karmas done with desire will, as was contended till now, create bondage.

११८. विशुद्धं प्रसन्नं आत्मावलोकनक्षमं भवति ।

118. When pure and tranquil, (the mind) becomes fit for the contemplation of the Self (G. XVIII-10).

११९. तस्यैव नित्यकर्मानुष्ठानेन विशुद्धान्तःकरणस्य आत्मज्ञानाभिमुखस्य क्रमेण ज्ञाननिष्ठा ।

119. For him whose mind has thus been purified by performance of regular acts and who thus becomes inclined to knowledge of the Self, Jnana Nishtha (stead-fast meditation of Self) is the next gradual step (G. XVIII-10).

Note :—The higher step from Karma Yoga is Jnana Nishtha.

१२०. किं स्वकर्मानुष्ठानादेव साक्षात्संसिद्धिः । न । स्वकर्मणा अन्तर्यामिणमीश्वरं पूजयित्वा केवलं ज्ञाननिष्ठानुष्ठानयोग्यतालक्षणम् सिद्धिं विन्दति ।

120. Can this perfection be attained **directly** by the mere performance of one's own duty? No. Worshipping the Lord, the ruler within, by the performance of duty, man attains per-

fection; only, if he does thus, he becomes qualified for devotion to knowledge (Jnana Nishtha) (G. XVIII 18-45 & 46).

Note :—Mechanical discharge of duty will not form Karma Yoga. The glow of detachment or dedication of the work to God must be present in the mind.

१२१. अभ्युदयार्थोऽपि प्रवृत्तिलक्षणो वर्णाश्रमदेवादिस्थानप्राप्तिहेतुरपि सन् ईश्वरार्पणबुद्ध्यानुष्ठीयमानः सत्वशुद्धये भवति फलांभिसन्धिवर्जितः ।

121. The external activity and rites, enjoined on the several castes and religious orders as a means of prosperity, lead the devotees to the region of the Devas and the like; still, when practised in a spirit of devotion to the Lord and without attachment to fruits, they conduce to the purity of the mind (G. Intr.).

Note :—Varnasrama Karmas have been conceived at first as Pravritti Karmas (see note on 83 for Pravritti Karma). Pravritti Karma ceases to bind when done as Karma Yoga.

१२२. अतश्च अविद्यापूर्वकस्य कर्मणा विद्यैव शुभस्य वा अशुभस्य वा क्षयकारणं न नित्यकर्मानुष्ठानम् ।

122. So knowledge (realisation of the Self) alone can cause the destruction of the good or evil deeds caused by Avidya (ignorance) and not the performance of the Nitya Karma (regular rites) (G. XVIII-66).

१२३. न परमात्मयाथात्म्यविज्ञानवतः शमोपायव्यतिरेकेण किंचित्कर्म विहितमुपलभ्यते ।

123. For one who knows the true nature of the Supreme Self, we do not find any other work enjoined, except what leads to the cessation of activities (Br. 1-3-1).

Note :—On discarding Karma, one should take up practices for the purification of the mind.

१२४. ते एते विद्याविद्याकार्ये सर्वात्मभावः परिच्छिन्नात्मभावश्च ।

124. Thus the results of knowledge (Self-realisation) is identity with all; the result of ignorance (lack of Self-realisation) is identity with the limited personality of one's own body (Br. IV-3-20).

१२५. सा चाविद्या न आत्मनः स्वाभाविको धर्मः यस्मात् विद्यायामुत्कृष्यमाणायां स्वयं अपचीयमाना सती काष्ठां गतायां विद्यायां परिनिष्ठिते सर्वात्मभावे सर्वात्मना निवर्तते ।

125. Ignorance is not the natural characteristic of the self since it automatically decreases as knowledge increases and when the latter is at its highest, ignorance vanishes altogether with the result that the self realises its identity with all (Br. IV-3-20).

Note:—The transition from giving up Karma to adopting steps for purification is a gradual process. The first gets attenuated and the second grows in strength. As ignorance and work are not a part of the nature of Self, work can be given up. The test of true Jnana is feeling identity with all. This is the consummation (not even the highest enjoyment in heaven).

१२६. विद्वद्विषया च सर्वकर्मसन्यासपूर्वका ज्ञाननिष्ठा ।

126. The sphere for the knowing (men of discrimination) is Jnana Nishtha, preceded by the renunciation of all works (G. XVIII-66).

CHAPTER III

UPASANA (MEDITATION)

Introduction

Karma may be physical, i.e. with the aid of wife, fire, oblations, etc. It may also be purely mental where none of the factors just mentioned are called into requisition. The Vedas teach that both alike are effective to gain for the votaries their objectives. Upasana is that activity of the mind in which the flow of one single idea is continuously kept up, to the complete exclusion of all other ideas. The other name for Upasana, more commonly occurring in the Upanishads, is "Vidya".

Vidya : Its Evolution

"Vidya" in modern Sanskrit, say in the age of the Mahabharata, means knowledge. But it did not bear this meaning in the 'old Sanskrit' of the Upanishads. So, to always understand "Vidya" to mean knowledge and translate it accordingly is very often wrong. In the Upanishads, it most often means Upasana or meditation. The meaning of the word "Vidya" underwent a change due to the evolution of the mind of man in his search for Truth. In many English translations of the Upanishads, the older meaning of "Vidya" is not recognised and its translation as knowledge and of the verb "Veda" as "knows" conveys no significance in understanding passages where these occur.

Vidya comes from the root "Vid" to know. So Vidya is the attempt or process to know matters and things. As every process has its evolution and growth before it assumes its final form, Vidya too has had its evolution and the texts of the Upanishads, especially Chandogya, have presented Vidya in various stages of its evolution, as it has also preserved Vidya in its most developed form. The motor cars of the early decades of the cen-

tury did serve a purpose then, but no one would think of making use of them for one's journey now. Our attitude to many of the Vidyas can be similar to our attitude to the motor cars of the earlier decades. To consider that all Vidyas are of equal value to the spiritual life simply because they all occur in the Upanishad text, is like thinking that all the cars in a motor "museum" are of equal value to the present-day motorist.

Vidyas arose when man began to think seriously that he might "know" about matters which eluded his grasp. When man attempts to know, his mind naturally becomes calm and concentrated; his imagination begins to play. Thus Vidya gets naturally associated with concentration along with imagination. Many stages have to be passed before the mystery is cleared up and the thing becomes "known".

These intermediate stages of concentration with imagination were distinguished and termed Upasana, sitting near Truth and not reaching it, and the final stage is named Jnana. That is why in the Scriptural texts, the knowledge of Brahman is called Brahma Vidya. The Upanishads themselves recognise the distinction between the stages of development and their final culmination. In the various stages of development strong and clear imagery or mental image is called up. The culmination is realisation of Truth. These are called in the Upanishads "Apara Vidya and Para Vidya". As the mind dwells upon a problem for long with great fervour, deepest concentration ensues. The mind is strengthened by meditation as the body by exercise. But purity of mind is of greater importance than strength of mind. Ravana had great strength of mind but not sufficient purity of mind. The evil tendencies of the mind, viz. desire, lust, greed, etc., have to be eradicated. Vasanas (tendencies of the mind) are great forces and the direction of one force can be altered, or the force itself neutralised, only by another and opposite force of equal or greater strength.

The calling up of these positive forces against the negative tendencies of the mind is consciously or unconsciously effected during meditation. This is a greater factor in meditation than even mere concentration. In fact, the strength generated in the mind by concentration has to be used for the conquest of Vasanas.

Upasana Versus Jnana

When the strength of the mind is not used for the conquest of Vasanas, but to gain other results, it is termed Upasana. But when the strength gained is used for fighting the Vasanas and thus gaining purity of mind, it becomes Jnana Nishtha or Jnana Yoga. This process or attempt ends in the flash of a new insight, a sixth sense, if it may be so called. This is Jnana. The Truth now stands revealed; the Self shines in all its glory comprehending all. Only Jnana is everlasting and never deserts man.

One sees with the eye and knows one aspect of a thing, its form—"this sugar is in good crystal form". When the sugar is tasted, it is found to be sweet. It is another aspect of sugar, to be known only by the tongue and not by the eye.

Thus each sense gives one aspect of the knowledge about a thing. Then we say "I have experienced it. I have no more doubts about its form or about its taste, etc." No argument can serve to sweep one off his feet regarding one or other aspects of that thing when it is thus known.

Apara Vidya and Para Vidya

By Yoga or meditation which serves to bring about Vasananasa (destruction of the lower tendencies) man, so to say, attains to his purest and subtlest state. Yoga restores man to his inherent divinity.

The cataract in the eye blinds it, but when the cataract is removed, the eye begins to function as before and sees. Properly understood, the operation of the eye for cataract does not confer on the eye any new power. The old power of the eye was obstructed by the cataract, and when the obstruction is removed, the power functions again. Religions say that man has lost his innate divinity. Desire, greed, and attachment constitute the cataract; meditation is the operation to remove it. Man then regains his original divinity which gives him a new insight. He sees the whole world as divine. Yoga means joining. As the process of meditation joins man once more to his innate divinity, it is known as Yoga, the most important act of joining.

This higher aspect of meditation, where the attempt is to burn the dross of the mind, is called Para Vidya. When the existence of the dross is not even recognised, and for various other purposes the mind is being strengthened by concentration, it is called Apara Vidya. Siddhis result from Apara Vidya and not Jnana (insight into Reality). That is why Raja Yoga mentions as its first step Yama and Niyama (the control of the mind and the senses). Raja Yoga has simply codified the experience and teachings of the Rishis, in the field of upasanas.

Sagunopasana and Nirgunopasana

The difference between these two arises from another factor altogether. Atman is the eternal "seer"; it never becomes the "seen". When man takes up as the object for meditation the Atman in himself, which by all his effort he cannot conceive or imagine, which yet he knows as obstinately to exist as himself brooking no denial, it becomes Nirgunopasana. Here there is no prop to the mind; only the mind has to become absolutely still; he becomes Atman-Nishtha, firmly seated in Atman.

But when he posits an external God, he assigns a form to it given by tradition; that forms the prop for his mind, and

meditation on God with the aid of this prop, say idol, etc., constitutes Sagunopasana. The Dhyana Slokas (meditation verses) in relation to the various deities, the different aspects of the one God, are meant to suggest to the meditator the imagery to be called up in the mind. The culmination of meditation is the attainment of identity with the Deity.

Pranava Vidya

One of the Vidyas which, because of its importance, has formed the one theme of the Mandukya Upanishad and has been dealt with by other Upanishads as well (Katha and Prasna) is the Pranava Vidya. It is even today as popular among the Sanyasins as Gayatri is among Brahmacharins and householders.

Pranava is the name given to the sound "Om". It is sometimes called the mystic syllable "Om", as it is the prop for meditation. Sankara takes every opportunity to remind that "Om" is only a Pratika (symbol) as the sacred Saligram stone is of Vishnu. To mistake the Pratika itself as the object of worship and as possessing all its powers and greatness, is a great fall in the conception of meditation and ought to be avoided.

But all Pratikas are extremely useful and helpful aids which cannot be dispensed with in the early stages of the practice of meditation. "Om" is an extremely helpful Pratika because of its brevity for repetition and because of the high suggestiveness it can be made to evoke.

"Om" has a great similarity with Atman as follows. The sound "Om" has three components in its make-up. They are "A", "U" and "M", and, when pronounced without haste, it prolongs itself into the indefinite fourth component. In the Mandukya Upanishad these are called the four Matras (components) of "Om".

Atman has three well-defined states which are within the everyday experience of all. The states are wakefulness, dream and deep sleep. But the Rishis say that these changing states of the same man must have a substratum. Changes cannot be observed if there is no substratum, just as the moving pictures of the cinema cannot be seen without the fixed background of a screen. So, the substratum to the changing states of man must necessarily exist. Not only reason indicates it, but Sages and Rishis of all lands have experienced it. The experiencing of this rock-bottom of man, the Atman, is the goal of all religions. All religious attempts have this end in view.

This substratum is by courtesy called the fourth state of man, Turiya. Turiya means fourth. This fourth state of man is more imponderable than perhaps the fourth component of "Om". In reality, it is the whole Real Man and not a fourth state at all. The three states are the waves while the fourth is the ocean itself.

Thus, both "Om" and Atman have three well-defined components or states, and a fourth one not so well defined. By a slow and prolonged utterance of "Om", the fourth component suggests itself and calls to our mind the indefinable substratum, viz. the real Atman, and the devotee's longing, to come face to face with Atman or God, is crowned with success.

Thus "Om" is a very powerful aid in the meditation for the realisation of God. The practice of meditation with the repetition of "Om" constitutes Pranava Vidya.

Sandhyopasana

Another Upasana very much current amongst all the Tryvarnikas (the three higher castes) is Sandhyopasana, at the morning dawn and the evening dusk. This Upasana, as it was to be done every day, was miscalled Nitya Karma. But this is not a Karma in the strict sense of the word, but an Upasana,

i.e., mere mental activity carried on for a long time. Even now it is prevalent to a very large extent in Hindu society, but there is a misconception regarding it due to its incorrect classification along with Nitya Karma. It is popularly believed that this Sandhya has to be done as it has been enjoined in the Vedas; that its performance offers no fruit at all, but its default brings about Pratyavaya (evil consequences). All these are ideas connected with the performance of the ideal Nitya Karma, namely, Agnihotra, as expounded by Mimamsakas. These are shown to be entirely at variance with the meaning conveyed by the passage where this Upasana is prescribed.

उद्यन्तमस्तंयन्तमादित्यमभिध्यायन्कुर्वन्ब्राह्मणो विद्वान्सकलं भद्रमश्नुतेऽसावादित्यो ब्रह्मेति, ब्रह्मैव सन्ब्रह्माप्येति, य एवं वेद ।

"Man attains great prosperity and security by the meditation of the rising and setting Sun. The Sun is a symbol of Brahman itself; being Brahman one attains to Brahmanhood."

(Krishna Yajur Veda Tai. Ar. 2-2).

The passage clearly states three things :—

(1) That the meditation is to be performed at dawn and dusk daily, i.e., only twice a day; the meditation at noon is not prescribed here; it is a later addition and innovation by one Narayana Rishi.

(2) The passage itself states that these meditations confer immense good, contrary to the popular mistaken idea about Nitya Karma, that it does not confer any fruit at all. If it is done daily, better and more will be the results. See No. 102.

(3) The passage prescribes the Sun expressly as a Pratika, i.e., a symbol of Brahman. What is conceived here is not Nature worship, as the West often characterizes the Indian way of worship. The meditation is regarding the all-pervading Brahman itself.

These three points have to be clearly borne in mind by modern Hindus whenever they perform their Sandhya.

In Sandhya the Mantra used is the great Gayatri:

ॐ तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गोदेवस्य धीमहि । धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥

> "We meditate on that adorable glory of that Progenitor of the universe (the Sun is the source of all life on the earth and Brahman is the source of all that exists). May It inspire our intellect and ethical faculties."

This Mantra has an advantage on the Pranava "Om". "Om" is a symbol and does not wear its meaning on its face; so it is variously interpreted. But the great Gayatri conveys directly and unequivocally its grand message to man.

Here we have one of the highest forms of prayer. The prayer to God here is not to confer on man merely his daily bread and other blessings. On the other hand, God should take full possession of man himself; the ego in man should be effaced and, in its place, God should shine in all His glory in the meditator. Thus it is that Gayatri has become a Mantra (word or passage of great spiritual power). Sandhya being thus a meditation or Upasana, the performer should concentrate all his mind on the meaning conveyed by the Mantra, to see that his baser nature is replaced by divine nature. Sandhya is thus meant to effect the greatest transformation possible for man, from his state of being a brute to the state of being God.

It is regrettable that the significance of the performance of the Sandhya is not recognised, especially by the younger generation.

Perhaps, if the meaning and significance of Sandhya, as explained above, are brought to their notice, they will take to it eagerly. It is to be taken not as a command of the Veda but as a means to the greatest spiritual development, shown by the

Vedas for the great good of man. The transformation of character, bringing purity and strength as its elements, will be the great result conferred by daily Sandhyavandana. The timings for the performance are very appropriate; both are moments of calmness in nature when the mind can be turned inwards easily.

The sages have conceived Sandhyavandana as a preliminary training for the development of the soul. The soul in a sense is purified and nourished by meditation, as body by food and the mind by studies. Equipped with this preliminary training in concentration, one can reach great heights of meditation as one grows up.

One thing more deserves special mention. One should not be satisfied by the mere repetition of the sounds composing the Gayatri. There should be the vital play of emotion and light in the mind, which is the more important factor. Sandhya attains to an ideal state if the whole operation becomes merely mental (see Nos. 31 to 34).

Nama Japa

Vidya has evolved still further in the post-Upanishadic period. Upasana means "sitting near", i.e. sitting near God. Upasana has become most popular as Nama Japa, the repetition of the Name of God with great devotion and concentration. In the time of the Gita itself, Nama Japa had sprung up. The Gita states : यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि "Of the Yajnas, I (God) am Japa Yajna." So Japa (repetition) of Name is the best of Yajnas. In fact Nama Japa is the latest, most evolved, and most popular of the Upasanas. It has been the most popular with saints of all religions. It is a direct lineal descendant of Vidya.

Nama Japa has an advantage over "Om". The meaning of "Om" is not apparent on the face of it. The Sadhaka has to be initiated into the meaning of "Om". Its correspondence

with the states of Atman has to be pointed out and explained. But the Nama automatically brings into the mind the various attributes of God. High, pure and noble associations dawn in the mind on the utterance of Nama. This is the great advantage Nama Japa has over "Om" and the cause of its popularity.

Everyone is welcome to choose the God's name familiar to him from his religious tradition. This is generally imparted to him by his Guru (religious teacher).

It has been the experience of the saints that Nama Japa can be used both in Sagunopasana as well as in Nirgunopasana. Some, however, still consider "Om" as more suited for the Nirguna practice.

Another purpose of Upasana

Poor people may not be able to perform very costly Yajnas like Aswamedha Yajna (the horse sacrifice) meant for the emperors, which enables the performers to attain the abode of Hiranyagarbha, the highest position imaginable by Karma. But they may be eager for the status conferred by the horse-sacrifice. Are they to be denied that status? No. They are to win the same status or higher world by Aswamedha Vidya, with a description of which the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad opens. By practising that meditation properly, i.e. as has been delineated in the text, they attain that world without the help of any material factors.

The same holds good with other Yajnas also.

Upasana in general

The main agency as already stated in Upasana or Vidya is mental concentration "Chittaikagrya". The objects of meditation are various and the fruits are also equally various. The results of these, like those of Karma, are temporal and not eternal and entail rebirth. The objective of Upasana (as distinct

from Jnana-nishtḥa) is the attainment of prosperity and not Truth.

This great difference has to be borne in mind as both Upasana and Jnana involve intense concentration. While Jnana is gasping to know the Truth, Upasana is thirsting only for prosperity. A Ravana may resort to Upasana but not to Jnana. A Ramana Maharshi resorts to Jnana but not to Upasana.

Just as Vedic rituals, excepting the few referred to above, have on the whole fallen into disuse, especially those in the form of the various Yagas or sacrifices, even more so, the Vedic Upasanas have ceased to be current, except the Pranava Vidya (meditation on "Om") dealt with in the Mandukya Upanishad as already mentioned and the Sandhyopasana. They have survived mostly in the form of Nama Japa in a more effective form.

But the death is always for the form and not for the spirit. The Yajnas in the fire have now taken birth as Pujas (worship) in temples. The Upasanas too must have taken rebirth in other forms. They had such a vital part in the life of the Aryans. It is by the use of these that they attained their miraculous powers, the Siddhis and the wonderful powers of the mind. The tradition in this connection could not have been lost but only developed. Upasanas have re-embodied themselves in the form of Yoga Sastra. What was more or less empirical in the Vedic times has now taken a more scientific shape in the Raja Yoga of Patanjali.

Upasanas as such, though found in large numbers in the Vedas, especially the two long Upanishads Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka, have not had any interpreters so far as is known. The two great interpreters of the Vedas are Jaimini for the Karma Kanda and Vyasa for the Jnana Kanda. The ritualist in Jaimini would not have anything to do with Upasana as it does not have the factors of fire, wife, oblations, etc. Vyasa has

dealt with Upasanas in a casual way in the Brahma Sutras, Chapter III, pada 3. Sankara, the great commentator of the Brahma Sutras, does not work himself into any enthusiasm over this section, for Upasana is not after all for Jnana, but for enjoyments and attainment of psychic powers. On the contrary, he is all enthusiasm in delineating real Jnana.

In the view of the above-mentioned Acharyas, the position of Upasanas is like that of a bat which is neither a bird nor a beast and so not owned by any of these two groups as their own, because the Vedic Upasana is neither a pure ritual nor a practice for Jnana. But, as Sankara observes, it has only the low status of Karma, कर्मान्तपातित्व (Karmantapatitva), as it is like the Vedic Karma unable to release one from bondage. Yet, it has an aspect of the practice of Jnana, as both Upasana and Jnana Nishtha are alike acts of intense mental concentration.

Note :—In practising the Asvamedha Upasana (the meditation called Horse Sacrifice), one has to imagine in his mind the picture of the horse as given in Br. 1-1-1 as:—"The head of the sacrificial horse is the dawn, its eye the sun, its vital force air, ... its shaking the body is thundering, its making water is raining and its neighing is voice."

No detail as given in the text should be omitted or altered. Then the meditation becomes defective and is not expected to give its fruit.

Meticulous adherence to the text is important in Karmas and Upasanas.

PART A—STILL PRAVRITTI

Definitions

१२७. उपासनं नाम समानप्रत्ययप्रवाहकरणम् ।

127. Upasana consists in making a current of similar ideas to flow continuously. (S.B. IV-1.7).

Note:—This gives a neat and pithy definition of Upasana.

१२८. उपासनं च यथाशास्त्रं तुल्यप्रत्ययसन्ततिः
असंकीर्णा च अतत्प्रत्ययैः शास्त्रोक्तालंबनविषया च
प्रसिद्धश्च उपासनाशब्दार्थो लोके "गुरुमुपास्ते, राजानमुपास्ते" इति ।

128. By Upasana (meditation) is meant the continuous flow of similar ideas as prescribed by Sastras (Scriptures) unmixed with any dissimilar ideas. The prop for the mind is the object as described by Sastra. The word Upasana as well as its meaning is well known from its usage in ordinary life: "He does Upasana (to constantly think of and serve) to his Guru to win his favour. He does Upasana to the king." (Tai. 1-3-4).

१२९. उपासनं नाम यथाशास्त्रं उपास्यार्थस्य विषयीकरणेन, सामीप्य मुपगम्य, तैलधारावत् समानप्रत्ययप्रवाहेण दीर्घकालं यदासनम् ।

129. Upasana (meditation) consists in approaching the object of worship as instructed by the Sastra by visualising it and dwelling on it for a long time steadily in a current of the same idea, continuous like a flowing thread of oil. (G. XII-3).

Note:—The relevant text alone is the basis for the mental imagery. So Upasana in this respect is similar to Karma, where also the details should be neither more nor less than what is prescribed in the text.

१३०. तैलधारावत् सन्ततो अविच्छिन्नप्रत्ययो ध्यानम् ।

130. Dhyana (meditation) is continuous and unbroken thought like a line of flowing oil. (G. XIII-24).

१३१. उपासनं निदिध्यासनं च, इति अन्तर्णीतावृत्तिगुणैव क्रियाभिधीयते । लोके "गुरुमुपास्ते, राजानमुपास्ते" इति यः तात्पर्येण गुर्वादीननुवर्तते, स एवं उच्यते । तथा ध्यायति प्रोषितनाथा पतिमिति । या निरन्तरस्मरणा पतिं प्रति सोत्कण्ठा सैवमभिधीयते

131. Such terms as "meditation," "being devoted to," and "reflecting," denote actions conducted within (in the mind) in which repetition is implied as a quality. Thus we say in ordinary life that a person is devoted to a teacher or a king if he follows him with a mind steadily set on him; and of a wife whose husband has gone on a journey that she thinks of him, only if she steadily remembers him with great longing. (S.B. IV-1-1).

149B and 178C are also definitions of Upasana.

१३२. (ए) विद्युपास्त्योश्च वेदान्तेषु अव्यतिरेकेणैव प्रयोगो ।
(बी) वेदोपासनशब्दयोः एकार्थता अवगम्यते ।
(सी) भवति हि शब्दभेदः "वेद" "उपासीत" "स क्रतुं कुर्वीत" इत्येवमादिः इह न अर्थभेदः, सर्वेषामेवैषां मनोवृत्त्यर्थत्वाऽभेदात् अर्थान्तरा । संभवाच्च ।

132A. In Vedanta (texts) the terms "Vidya and Upasana" (knowing and meditation) are used one in place of the other.

B. Thus it is clear that the words "Veda" and "Upasana" have the same meaning.

C. There occur (in the Vedas) different expressions like "Veda" (knows), "Upasita" (meditates) and "he does an act of faith". But no difference in meaning occurs. There is no difference between these because of the fact that all alike relate to the "activity and attitude of the mind". They cannot refer to anything else. (S.B. III-3-58).

Note:—The well-known meaning of the verb "Veda" is "knows", but it has also another meaning Upasita (meditates). This has to be well remembered when the word Veda occurs in Upasana sections, as it very often does. Even great scholars, while translating this word trip upon this word by giving its meaning and translation as "knows" and the reader is confused. Sankara clears this confusion in these passages.

Like Karma

१३३. कर्तृत्वादिसर्वसंसारधर्मनिराकरणेन हि ब्रह्मण: आत्मत्वोपदेश: । तदनिराकरणेन च उपासनविधानम् । अतश्चोपासकस्य प्रतीकै: समत्वात् आत्मग्राहो नोपपद्यते ।

133. The teaching that Brahman is identical with Atman is (true) when actorship and other attributes of a migratory life are discarded (from the soul). The injunction for meditation does not require the non-removal of the characteristics (of the self) as an actor and other signs of transmigratory existence. Hence for the meditating person, as he attains only sameness with the symbol (Pratika) there does not ensure the "Possession" as it were with the Self (Brahman) i.e. Self-realisation. (S.B. 4-1-4).

Note:—In Upasana, one's mind is set generally on a form of enjoyment or power, etc. The Upasaka is not called upon to cast off his ego, which as such feels as the actor and longs for the result. In some Upasanas he attains identity with the Pratika. Christian saints often attained identity with Christ. But as the longing is not for Truth, there results no Self-realization.

१३४. उपासनानां क्रियात्मकत्वात् ।

134. Because, in its inner core, Upasana is a Kriya (ritual) a conventional act. (S.B. 3-3-42).

Note:—In Upasana as in Karma there is no longing to cast off Samsara and attain self-realisation. In both these, the idea that Samsara by its very nature, is the cause of misery, has not dawned on the mind of man (see also Note to 136).

१३५. आत्मा हि नामाधिकृत: कर्मण्युपासने च संसारी कर्मोपासनं वा साधनमनुयत् ब्रह्मादिदेवान् स्वर्गं वा प्राप्तुं इच्छति । तत्तस्मादन्य उपास्यो विष्णुरीश्वर: इन्द्र: प्राणो वा ब्रह्म भवितुं अर्हति । न तु आत्मा:— लोकप्रत्ययविरोधात ।

यथान्ये तार्किका ईश्वरादन्य आत्मेत्याचक्षते तथा कर्मिणोऽमुं यजामुंय-
जेत्यन्या एव देवता उपासते ।

135. The Atman is subject to births and rebirths and feels that it has to resort to Karma and Upasana. By performing Karma and Upasana as means, it desires to attain the Lokas of Brahma or other Devas or heaven. So it is but natural that these objects of worship, Vishnu, Iswara, Indra or Prana should be entities different from Atman and not one with Atman as that is contrary to the world by experience.

Just as "logicians" contend that Atman is different from Iswara, so also votaries of Karma (and Upasana) worship or meditate on Devas different from themselves (Kena 1-5).

Note:—The worshipper never wishes to lose his individuality in Upasana or Bhakti of later days. The difference between Bhakta and the Lord is kept up. This is the attitude adopted by all Dvaitins, believers in duality or even multiplicity. Logicians are Nayyayikas. Nyaya constitutes one of the six famous schools of philosophy (Shad Darsanas).

Why Necessary?

१३६ (ए) अस्य तु अश्वमेधसंबंधिनो विज्ञानस्य प्रयोजनं, येषां अश्वमेधे नाधिकारः तेषां अस्मादेव विज्ञानात् फलप्राप्तिः ।

(बी) कर्मविषयत्वमेव विज्ञानस्य इति चेत न । योऽश्वमेधेन यजते, य उ चैनमेवं वेद इति विकल्पश्रुतेः ।

136A. The utility of meditation concerning the horse sacrifice is this: those who are not entitled to this sacrifice will get the same result through this meditation itself.

(b) Objection: This meditation is just a part of that rite.

Reply : No, for the following Sruti passage allows option: "Those who perform the horse sacrifice or who know (meditate on) it as such." (Br. Intro.).

Note:—The famous Brihadaranyaka Upanishad opens with a description of the Upasana on the Aswamedha sacrifice. Here

the horse to be sacrificed is the cosmic being, Hiranyagarbha himself, as described in the text. The rule in Karma and Upasana is that the prescription of these two, as given by the text, should not be deviated even by a hair's breadth. These texts do not admit of the question "Why is no deviation allowed?" Here is another similarity between Upasana and Vedic Karmas. See Note to 134.

१३७. ये श्रोत्रियाःस्थूलबुद्धित्वात् अजातिवस्तुना सदा आत्मनाशं पश्यन्ति, तेषां श्रद्धाधानानां सन्मार्गावलम्बिनां जात्युपलम्भकृतां दोषां सिद्धिं नोपयास्यन्ति ।

137. (Brahman is unborn and Nirguna). Some devotees of the Vedas, not being of sharp intellect, shrink back from the unborn or unmanifest (Nirguna) Brahman (as an object of meditation). For such the wise have conceded meditation with form. As these are full of faith and of correct conduct, the harm done by meditation with form (on the formless Brahman) will be very little. (Mu. IV-42-143).

Note:—The meditation on Saguna Brahman is recognised as an essential and inevitable step for many. Only it should not be conceived that there is no higher step. Nirgunopasana or Jnana Nishtha is higher. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa benefited by Sagunopasana on Kali, later on had to go up to Nirgunopasana under the guidance of Tota Puri and realise the Advaita state.

१३८. न हि अविकारे अनन्ते ब्रह्मणि सर्वैः पुंभिः शक्या बुद्धिः स्थापायितुं मन्दमध्यमोत्तमबुद्धित्वात् पुंसामिति ।

188. For, as some men are of inferior, others middling, others again of superior intelligence, not all are capable of fixing their mind on the infinite Brahman devoid of any change or transformation. (S.B. III-2-33).

१३९. निर्गुणमपि सद् ब्रह्म नामरूपगतैः गुणैः सगुणं उपासनार्थं तत्र तत्र उपदिश्यते इत्येतदपि उक्तमेव । सर्वगतस्यापि ब्रह्मणः उपलब्ध्यर्थं स्थानाविशेषो न विरुध्यते, शालग्राम इव विष्णोः इत्येतदपि उक्तमेव ॥

139. It is but appropriate that Brahman although devoid of qualities is prescribed by various texts for purposes of meditation as possessing qualities depending on name and form. It is not inappropriate to assign specific places for the Omnipresent Brahman as it serves as a prop (to the mind) in meditation, just as it is justifiable to contemplate Vishnu in the sacred Saligrama (stone). (S.B. 1-2-14).

Note:—It is a postulate with a thoughtful Hindu that the sacred Saligrama stone itself does not form the object of worship, but while facing Saligrama, he is reminded of Vishnu who then becomes the object of worship or meditation. This is so well and so clearly understood by modern Hindus that Sankara uses this analogy for explaining meditation. "Om" and other symbols form the objects of Vedic meditations as mere Pratikas, symbols like Saligrama. Here is clear occasion to understand the principle of idol worship.

१४०. रूपाद्याकाररहितमेव ब्रह्मावधारयितव्यं न रूपादिमत । कस्मात् तत्प्रधानत्वात् ।

140. It must be definitely concluded that Brahman is devoid of any kind of form. Why? For this is the main purport of Scripture. (S. B. 3-2-14).

Note:—The main function of the Upanishads is to delineate the true nature of Brahman or Atman. But during the process of spiritual evolution, the Upasanas come into existence as stages on the way. An intermediate step, however attractive, should not be mistaken for the final goal.

Vidyas various

१४१. इतराणि तु आकारवद्ब्रह्मविषयाणि वाक्यानि न तत्प्रधानानि । उपासना-विधिप्रधानानि हि तानि । तेषु असति विरोधे यथाश्रुतं आश्रयितव्यम् ।

141. Other (passages), on the other hand, which refer to Brahman as qualified by form have not the aim of setting forth

the true nature of Brahman. They are mainly enjoined to serve as prop in meditation. These forms may be resorted to for meditation exactly as described by the text if no contradiction is involved. (S.B. 3-2-14).

Note:—As already stated in Note to 136, in doing Upasana as in Karma, no deviation from the text is to be tolerated in forming the mental conception of the object given by the text.

१४२. मनोवृत्यर्थत्वाभेदेपि अनुबन्धभेदात् वेद्यभेदे सति विद्याभेदोपपत्तेः ।

142. Even though mentation is a common feature in all meditations, meditations themselves become different when there are differences in the conceptions in regard to God. (S.B. III-3-58).

Note:—God is one and attributeless. But to Him are assigned various attributes by the Upasaka. Thus even though the one God is the object of meditation, the meditations dealt with in the Vedas become different with the difference in the attributes assigned.

१४३. भिन्नोहि प्रतिविद्यम् ब्रह्मणः आकारः उपदिश्यते ।

143. In the different meditations, different forms of Brahman are inculcated.

Para and Apara Vidyas

१४४. द्वे विद्ये इत्यादि । परा च परमात्मविद्या । अपरा च धर्माधर्मसाधन-तत्फलविषया । अपरा हि विद्या अविद्या । सा निराकर्तव्या । तद्विषये हि विदिते नकिंचित् तत्वतो विदितं स्यात् ।

144. There are two sorts of knowledge to be attended to. The one is Para (great), the knowledge of Paramatman, and the other is Apara (not great) which deals with the means and result of Dharma (duty) and Adharma (blameworthy act). The Apara Vidya is indeed ignorance. It ought to be discarded: when a knowledge of Apara Vidya is gained, nothing indeed relating to Truth is known. (Mun. 1-4).

Note:—By Apara Vidya is comprehended Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda, as also Siksha (phonetics), Kalpa (the code dealing with rituals), Grammar, Nirukta (science of etymology), Chandas (metre) and Astrology. The latter six are known as Vedangas, the limbs of the Vedas i.e. of the first four.

१४५ (ए) उपनिषद्वेद्याक्षरविषयं हि विज्ञानं इह परा विद्येति प्राधान्येन विवक्षितम् । न उपनिषच्छब्दराशिः । वेदशब्देन तु सर्वत्र शब्दराशिः विवक्षितः।

(बी) वेदशब्दराश्यधिगमेऽपि यत्नान्तरमन्तरेण, गुर्वभिगमनादि लक्षणं वैराग्यं च न अक्षराधिगमः सम्भवतीति पृथक्करणं ब्रह्मविद्याया अथ परा विद्येति ।

145. A. By the term "Para Vidya" is meant primarily in this context the knowledge (realisation) of the Immortal which could be known through the Upanishads and not of the mere assemblage of words in them (Upanishads). But ordinarily everywhere by the term Veda is understood the assemblage of words.

B. The Immutable cannot be realised by a mere mastery of the assemblage of words, without other efforts such as approaching a Guru, and spurning of all desires, etc. The separate classification of the knowledge of Brahman and its designation as Para Vidya are thus proper. (Mun. 1-5).

Note:—Here Sankara points to the necessity of Guru over and above comprehending texts. A flaming torch is necessary to kindle another.

१४६. मन्दमध्यमधियां तु प्रतिपन्नसाधकभावनां सन्मार्गगामिनां संन्यासिनां मात्राणां पादानां च कॢप्तसामान्यविदां यथावदुपास्यमान ओङ्कारः ब्रह्मप्रतिपत्तये आलम्बनीभवति ।

146. For people of slow or middling intellect, but who are Sanyasins engaged in Sadhana and lead a virtuous life, a right meditation of "Om" based on the close and exact correspondence between the four states of the Atman and four parts of "Om"

becomes a prop to the mind in their effort to attain Brahman. (Mandukya 12).

Note:—This correspondence between Atman and Om has been dealt with in the Introduction to this Chapter under the section Pranava Vidya. It may be read once more here.

१४७(ए) " ओं " शब्दवाच्यं " ओं " शब्द प्रतीकं च ब्रह्म। अपरपरब्रह्मणोः हि प्रतीकं एतदक्षरम्। एतद्धि एव अक्षरं ज्ञात्वा (ब्रह्मेत्युपास्य) यो यदिच्छति परं अपरं वा तस्य तत् भवति।

(बी) परं चेत् ज्ञातव्यं अपरं चेत् प्राप्तव्यं।
आत्मनोऽशेषविशेषरहितस्यालम्बनत्वेन प्रतीकत्वेन च ओंकारो निर्दिष्टः, अपरस्य च ब्रह्मणः मन्दमध्यम प्रतिपतॄन् प्रति।

147 A. The sound "Om" indicates Brahman; it is also a Pratika (symbol) for Brahman. This letter "Om" is indeed the symbol for both the Higher (unmanifested) Brahman and the lower (manifested) Brahman. By meditating on this (Om) as Brahman he attains to whichever he wants, the Para or the Apara (Ka. 2-15).

B. If it is Para, it has to be **known.** If it is Apara it is to be reached (meditated upon) (Ka. 2-16). The sound "Om" has been pointed out as a prop and a symbol of the Atman devoid of all attributes, as also for those with slow and middling capacity for understanding. (It becomes the prop and symbol) for attaining to the Apara-Brahman (the one with attributes) (Ka. 2-18).

Note:—It has to be clearly understood that there are no two Brahmans one higher and the other lower. There is only one Brahman. But man conceives of it in two ways according to his capacity for understanding. For Samyak Darsana, his nature in man as Atman, beyond the three states of waking, dreaming or deep sleep, has to be reached. In other terms, Brahman in his true nature, as without any attributes, has to be meditated upon. But this is extremely difficult.

So many conceive of Brahman as with attributes as say, the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe, as the all-compassionate and all-mighty, etc. Worship of Him in anyone of these aspects, is Saguna Vidya. In fact, meditation is of two sorts and not Brahman. "Om" the symbol can be made use of for both sorts of meditation.

१४८. परं हि ब्रह्म शब्दाद्युपलक्षणानर्हं सर्वधर्मविशेषवर्जितं अतो न शक्यं अतीन्द्रियगोचरत्वात् केवलेन मनसा अवगाहितुं ।

(ए) ओंकारे तु विष्ण्वादि प्रतिमास्थानी । ये भक्त्यावेशितब्रह्मभावे ध्यायमानं तत् प्रसीदति इत्यवगम्यते शास्त्रप्रामाण्यात् । तथाऽपरं च ब्रह्म ।

(बी) तस्मात् परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोङ्कार इत्युपचर्यते ।

(सी) तस्मादेव विद्वान् एतेनैव आत्मप्राप्तिसाधनेनैव ओङ्काराभिध्यानेन एकतरं परमपरं वा ब्रह्मानुगच्छति ।

(डी) नेदिष्ठं ह्यालम्बनमोङ्कारं ब्रह्मण:
अपरं च ब्रह्म प्राणाख्यं हिरण्यगर्भाख्यं प्रथमजं च यत् ।

148. Indeed the Higher (attributeless) Brahman, incapable of being indicated by words, devoid of all qualities and attributes and thus being beyond the reach of the senses, is incapable of being grasped by the mere mind.

A. But, on the authority of the Sastras, to those worshippers who meditate on the syllable "Om" as upon the image of Vishnu, etc., and regard it as a symbol of Brahman, the Brahman is understood to become pleased. So does also the Apara Brahman.

B. Therefore that Brahman, whether higher or lower, is by courtesy said to be the symbol "Om".

C. So he who knows this aid to the attainment of Atman, by meditation on "Om" attains one of these, either Para or Apara Brahman.

D. Indeed the syllable "Om" is the nearest prop to

Brahman. Apara Brahman is called Prana or Hiranyagarbha or Prathamaja (the first born) (Prasna 5-2).

> १४९(ए) परापरब्रह्मप्राप्तिसाधनत्वेन ओंकारस्योपासनम् । परं सत्यं अक्षरं पुरुषाख्यम्। अपरं च प्राणाख्यं प्रथमजम्।
>
> (वी) बाह्यविषयेभ्यः उपसंहृतकरणः समाहितचित्तः भक्त्यावेशितब्रह्मभावे ओङ्कारे आत्मप्रत्ययसन्तानाविच्छेदः अभिन्नजातीय प्रत्ययान्तराऽखिलाकृतो निवातस्थदीपशिखासमोऽभिध्यान शब्दार्थः । सत्य ब्रह्मचर्य अहिंसा अपरिग्रह त्याग सन्यास शौच सन्तोपामायावित्वाद्यनेकयमनियमानुग्रहीतः सः॥

149 A. The meditation on the symbol "Om" is a means for the attainment of Para and Apara Brahman. Para, the true, the immutable, is known as Pursusha; the lower Brahman is known as Prana, the "first born".

B. The word Abhidhyana (meditation) denotes the following state of the mind where the senses are turned away from the external objects; the mind composed and with intense devotion dwells on Brahman symbolised by "Om" on which the idea of Atman is imposed ceaselessly and without any break by other ideas, and thus the one-pointed mind is comparable to the steady flame protected from draughts of the wind.

One who meditates thus for his life, maintains the indispensable attributes like truth, abstinence from sensual pleasures, non-injury. non-acceptance (of gifts), renunciation, Sanyasa, cleanliness, cheerfulness, absence from fraud and many other kinds of control, external and internal. (Prasna V-1).

> १५०. परापरब्रह्मदृष्ट्या हि उपास्यमान ओंकार शब्दमात्रोऽपि परापरब्रह्मसाधनं भवति। सत्यालंबनं ब्रह्मणः परस्यापरस्य च प्रतिमेव विष्णोः ओमित्येतच्छब्द। रूपं ब्रह्मण इति मनसा उपासीत ।

150. Indeed "Om" is being meditated upon from the viewpoints of Para Brahman and Apara Brahman. Even though it is mere sound, it becomes the means for the attainment of attri-

buteless Brahman as well as Brahman with attributes. It is a peg to hang on the idea of Brahman in the aspects of Para and Apara, just as the idol is for the idea of Vishnu. "Om" has to be mentally meditated upon as the sound form of Brahman. (Tai. 1-8).

Note:—Sankara brings to our attention the use of the word इव (as) in the text. It tells us प्रतीक is not really Brahman, but has to be assumed as Brahman.

Results

१५१. तस्मात् महतो ब्रह्मणो विज्ञानप्रतीकेन उपासनात् ज्ञानैश्वर्यवन्तः भवान्ति ।

151. Therefore by the meditation of the great Brahman with the aid of a mental symbol, one becomes lordly and with knowledge. (Tai 2-5).

Note:—Rewards of lower order, like great scholarship and wisdom, as also worldly prosperity can be obtained by appropriate Upasana.

१५२. एक एव तु परमात्मेश्वरः तैस्तैर्गुणविशिष्टैः विशिष्ट उपास्यो यद्यपि भवति,
तथापि यथागुणोपासनमेव फलानि भिद्यन्ते । तं यथायथा तदेव भवाति ।

152. Though the Highest Self is one only, the Lord distinguished by different qualities becomes the object of different meditations; the fruits (of meditation) vary in accordance with qualities attributed (to the Lord) in the meditation. (S.B. Intr. I-1-12).

Note:—He who meditates on the highest self by means of the symbol "Om" as consisting of three Matras obtains for his (first) reward the world of Brahman, and after that gradually complete intuition (self realisation). The first three components of "Om" correspond to the well-known three states of Atma—waking, dreaming and deep sleep. The transcendental aspect of Atman or Brahman does not come within the reach of the mind. So the highest stage of the manifested, the Brahma

Loka only, is attained by this Upasana. But there is Krama Mukti (gradual attainment of Moksha) when the period of rule of Brahma is over, the soul in Brhama Loka attains final release along with Brahma or Hiranyagarbha. Dvaitins are perfectly satisfied with this kind of Moksha. The Advaitin's aspiration and hope is Sadyo Mukti (release here and now).

१५३. एवं एकोऽपि सन् ऐश्वर्ययोगात्, अनेकभावं आपद्य सर्वाणि आविशति ।

153. Thus (by this discipline) even though the Upasaka is single, by acquiring the powers of the Lord, he becomes many and enters all bodies. (S.B. IV-4-45).

Note:—One of the wonderful powers (Siddhis) of an Upasaka is given here. By appropriate Upasana or Yoga, the Upasaka can, by great powers of his mind, enter the minds of others: i.e. understand and influence their minds, as easily as if he were himself in their minds. This power to read and influence other minds is termed here "becomes many and enters all bodies," viz. "Parakaya Pravesa (Jiva itself entering the body of others)". This Parakaya Pravesa is often misunderstood. Thus Sri Sankara is said to have laid aside his body and his Jiva then entered the dead body of the king of Banaras to experience all kinds of erotic emotions and reply to questions on erotics put to him by the lady umpire at his famous controversy with the great Mimamsa scholar, Mandana Misra, who on defeat graciously became his equally famous disciple Sureshwaracharya.

This sort of leaving the body and entering another body is a crude interpretation of the power of Parakaya Pravesa. It is quite unnecessary for great Yogis like Sankara or Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa to leave their bodies and enter other bodies. They could read the experience of other minds or influence them merely by the highly superior power of their own minds. Indeed their Siddhis were most wonderful and of the very highest order, seldom reached by other Yogis.

१५४. सगुणविद्याविपाकावस्थानं तु एतत स्वर्गादिवत अवस्थान्तरं, यत्र तत ऐश्वर्यं उपचर्यते ।

154. On the Saguna (with attributes) meditation ripening, he becomes successful in the attainment of a changed state like stay in Paradise. Then his prosperity or lordly state comes about. (S.B. IV. 4-16).

Note:—Even praiseworthy acts like worship, etc., cause bondage if done with desire, as is usually the case. The warning given in this and No. 155 has to be well kept in mind and non-attachment cultivated.

१५५. सर्वासामेव अभ्युदयप्राप्तिफलानां सगुणानां विद्यानां, अविशेषेण एषा देवयानाख्या गतिः भवितुमर्हति ।

155. In all Saguna meditation practised with a view to the attainment of prosperity, without exception, reference to travelling by the "path of Devatas" is proper. (S.B. III-3-31).

Note:—After death, the soul's journey to the abode of the Devas is referred to here. Saguna meditation leads to rebirth.

१५६. फलं तु अतिथ्याद्युपासने इव आदित्याद्युपासने ऽपि ब्रह्मैव दास्यति, सर्वाध्यक्षत्वात् ।

156. The bestower of fruit even in the case of meditation on the sun is Brahma himself as he is the bestower of the reward in the case of honouring a guest, for he is the presiding Deity in all.

Note:—Here the allusion is to the contention of the Mimamsakas. Earlier Mimamsakas had no place for God in their scheme for the attainment of Parama Purushartha—the supreme end and aim of man. With them the Karma itself has the potency to bestow fruits. No factor other than Karma is required. So they contend that to bring in God is superfluous and unwarranted. This is one other of the great points of difference between Mimamsakas and Vedantins. The main point of difference in

the practice of religion is the importance assigned to Nitya Karma by the two schools.

१५७. अस्यां उपनिषदि कर्माङ्गसम्बन्धीनि, कर्मसमृद्धिफलानि, अभ्युदयसाधनानि, कैवल्यसंनिकृष्टफलानि, अद्वैतात् ईषद्विकृतब्रह्मविषयाणि " मनोमय " " प्राणशरीरः " इत्यादीनि च उच्यते ॥

157. In this Upanishad (Chandogya) are mentioned certain Upasanas which are connected with factors of ritual to make them richer (in fruit), others as means to bring about prosperity, others have results to approximate to liberation, and still others relate to Brahman slightly modified from the non-dual as in the passage "consisting of mind, and with a body of Prana," etc. (Cha. Intr.).

१५८. वैराजं पदं ज्ञानकर्मसमुच्चयानुष्ठानेन प्राप्नोति ।
एतावत् (वैराजं पदं) हि अतिक्रान्तेन विधिप्रतिषेधार्थेन मन्त्रब्राह्मणेन अवगन्तव्यम् वस्तु ।
वरद्वयसूचितं न आत्मतत्वविषययाथात्म्यं विज्ञानम् ॥

158. One attains to the position of the Virat by the continued practice of Upasana and Karma. Thus much (the position of the Virat) which has been indicated by the two boons to Nachiketas, is alone the province of Mantras and Brahmanas which are mandatory or prohibitory in their import. No knowledge relating to the true nature of the Atama is indicated by the two boons (of Yama). (K.-1-20 Intr.).

Note:—Here ज्ञान is used in the sense of Vidya or Upasana. Sankara's oft-repeated contention is that real knowledge (realisation) is quite oposed to Karma. In one, the mind goes within and in the other, it goes outside. Real knowledge comes with the death of ego. But he points out that Karma is not opposed to lower meditation, Upasana. In both, egoism is maintained without the least impair. The teachings of Samhita and Brahmana portions of the Vedas, in general, do not deal with the

inquiry into Truth. The inquiry into Truth is taken up mainly in the Upanishads. See No. 169 and also No. 177 A.

१५९. कानिचित् ब्रह्मणः उपासनानि कर्म समृद्धयर्थानि, कानिचित् अभ्युदयार्थानि कानिचित्क्रममुक्त्यर्थानि, तेषां गुणविशेषोपाधिभेदेन भेदः। यथागुणोपासनं तैस्तैः गुणविशेषैः विशिष्टः उपास्यो भवति। यथागुणोपासनं एव फलानि भिद्यन्ते।

त्रिमात्रेण ओंकारेण आलम्बनेन परमात्मानमभिध्यायतः फलं ब्रह्मलोकप्राप्तिः क्रमेण च सम्यग्दर्शनोत्पत्तिरिति क्रममुक्तिः।

159. Some of the Upasanas of Brahman are meant to bring about greater potency to the ritual, others are meant to confer prosperity and the purpose of still others is the attainment of Krama Mukti (gradual release). The difference in results is due to the difference in qualities assigned (to Brahman) and the conditions attached (to him).

The one and only one Supreme Lord, on being assigned different attributes, becomes the object of different meditations. The fruits vary according to the varying attributes assigned. (S.B. 1-1-12 Intr.).

The fruit attained by one who meditates on the Supreme Self with the aid of "Om as having the three components" is Brahma Loka (World of Brahman) and from there he gradually attains perfect realisation. (S.B. 1-3-13).

Note:—Krama Mukti (gradual release) has been dealt with in No. 152 and its Note.

१६०. हिरण्यगर्भोपासनेन हि अणिमादिप्राप्तिः अनैश्वर्यादिमृत्युतरणं च।

160. By the meditation of Hiranyagarbha one attains Siddhis like Anima, etc., and conquers natural evil acts and thus crosses over relative death (living of an animal life). (Is. 14).

Note:—Yoga Sastra mentions many Siddhis or miraculous powers like becoming small as an atom, etc.

१६१. यत्तु वायुविज्ञानात् क्वचित् अमृतत्वं अभिहितं तदापेक्षिकम् ।

161. The immortality mentioned as obtainable from the meditation of Vayu (here Hiranyagarbha) is merely a relative one and not Moksha. (S.B. 1-3-39).

Results Drishta (with experience)

१६२. तस्यैतस्य ब्रह्मणः साक्षात् उपलब्ध्यर्थं उपासनार्थं च हृदयाकाशः स्थानमित्युच्यते सालग्राम इव विष्णोः । तस्मिन् हि तत् ब्रह्म उपास्यमानं मनोमयत्वादिधर्मविशिष्टं साक्षात् उपलभ्यते, पाणाविवामलकम् ।

162. For the realisation of Brahman as well as meditation of it, the centre (for meditation) is said to be Hridayakasa (the ether within the heart of man) just as the sacred Saligrama (stone) is for meditation of Vishnu. Meditated in Hridaya (heart) and as qualified with the attribute "full of consciousness, etc.," He comes within our view as the fruit (Amalaka) does on our palm. (Tai. 1-6-1).

Note:—In higher Saguna Vidyas, there is a kind of realisation. The god may be seen in a certain form as in a vision by the devotee. He alone sees it but not others present with him. Thus Sri Ramakrishna had vision of Kali, and spoke to her and got replies.

Swami Ramdas of Anandasram had vision of Sri Krishna, Christ and Buddha at different times of his life. But he says these visions are not of great significance. They may be taken to be indications of the Sadhaka's progress. The unitive vision alone is the final and lasting one. The whole universe is then seen as but One and Divine. This experience has been within the reach of sages of all lands.

१६३. साक्षात्करणसाध्यं च विद्याबलं दर्शयन्ति श्रुतयः ।

163. The Vedas indicate that the fruit of meditation is capable of being realised. (S.B. III-3-58).

Note : Success in Upasana is attained only when, by intense concentrated thought, identity with the object of Upasana is achieved. "By meditation on that, he becomes that."

१६४. अविशिष्टं हि आसां फलं उपास्यविषयसाक्षात्करणम् ।

164. Their fruit is indeed invariably the realisation (seeing as if it were visible) of the object of meditation. (S.B. III-3-59).

Not all Upasanas have Drishta Phala

१६५. काम्यासु विद्यासु क्रियावत् अदृष्टेन आत्मना आत्मीयं फलं साधयन्तीषु साक्षात्करणापेक्षा नास्ति ।

165. In the Vidyas connected with the attainment of definite desires where the special results are achieved by means of their unseen principle (as in the case of Karma) there is no expectation of realisation (identification with the object of meditation). (S.B. III-3-60).

Note:—Some Vidyas are intended to produce unseen results only; the results are expected only after death.

१६६. य एवं वेद तेजस्वी अन्नादो भवति सर्वमायुरेति ज्योग्जीवति महान् प्रजया पशुभिः भवति महान् कीर्त्या, ब्रह्मवर्चसा विराजति ।

166. He who meditates thus (in this manner), becomes radiant, is endowed with good appetite, reaches the full length of life, lives gloriously, becomes great with offspring and cattle and great also with fame and shines with the holy effulgence born of sacred wisdom. (Cha. II-14).

Note:—It may once more be stated here that a number of Upasanas mentioned in the first four chapters of Chandogya have no currency now. Some of these are Prana Vidya, Udgita Vidya, Omkaropasana of many sorts for various purposes, Madhu Vidya, Gayatri Vidya, Sandilya Vidya, Kosa Vidya, Purusha Yajna Vidya, Aditya Vidya, Shodasa Vidya, Upakosala Vidya, etc.

१६७. संहितादिविषयाणि कर्मभिः अविरुद्धान्युपासनानि उक्तानि। अनन्तरं च अन्तः सोपाधिकमात्मदर्शनमुक्तं स्वाराज्यफलम् न च तावता अशेषतः संसारबीजस्य उपमर्दनमस्ति।

167. Many Upasanas (meditations) which are not inconsistant with performance of rituals forming the subject matter of Samhita, etc., have been described (up till now). After that, has been dealt with the meditation for the realisation of the Self with the attribute, viz. "that it is completely within." The result of this is the attainment of the overlordship (of the world). But even with the attainment of all these, the seed of Samsara (rebirths with joy and sorrow) has not been completely crushed (as not to sprout again). (Tai. 1-2-1).

Note:—This is a warning to us that the next higher step, viz. realisation of the Atman without any attributes and without any connection with any ritual, has to be taken up. This step is stated in Sutra form as "It is the Knower (and not the meditator) of Brahman that attains the highest." (See 170). The second chapter of Taittiriya is an explanation of this Sutra with which that chapter opens.

१६८. (ए) या गतिः ज्ञानकर्मसमुच्चयानुष्ठानफलभूता सापि नालं संसार-दुःखोपशमनाय।

(बी) सर्वमपि एतत् उपासनाकर्मफलं संसार एव।

168 A. That state or course which is the result of combined practice of Karma and meditation (Upasana) is not sufficient or efficient to put a stop to the miseries of Samsara. (Ai. 1-2-1).

B. The sum total of the results of all these meditations and Karmas (rites) fall within the relative world alone. (Br. 1-4-1).

Note:—A. Karmas do not lead to Moksha. So also, most of the lower Upasanas, where the attitude of mind is similar to that in Karma. In both of these, "ego" is not recognised as the great enemy within.

B. The fruit of Upasana as that of Karma is only Bhoga or enjoyment, and not the attainment of realisation.

Nor is Upasana a Search for Reality

१६९. उपासनाविधिपरं हि वाक्यं न वस्तुतत्त्वप्रतिपादनपरम् ।

169. The injunctions about Upasana do not concern themselves with the delineations of the principles of Truth. (S.B. III-3-9). Also see 173 and 177 A.

Note:—This has to be specially remembered in trying to understand Upasanas. The mind has such a reverence for the Vedas that it thinks that everywhere it deals with Truth and nothing but Truth. This is not the case. One of the great achievements of Acharya Jaimini is his classification of sentences into (1) Vidhi and (2) Vidhisesha (injunctions and supplements to injunctions). Further, it is accepted by all the Acharyas that Vidhiseshas (or Arthavadas, the more commonly used name for the same) need not be taken at their face value. Only those which deal with Atindriya Vishaya (supersensuous truths) and which have a result, have to be accepted in full and rightly understood. Arthavadas have no results; they are meant to eulogise the main sentence.

None of the founders of the six systems of thought (Shad Darsanas) have been fundamentalists like the Christians. The Bible says that the universe was created by God in six days. This statement is accepted as true as it occurs in the Bible. So, the theory of evolution which posits that the universe took millions of years to come to the present form was regarded as blasphemous as it goes against the statement in the Bible.

It would be better for Hindu society also in the present day if the theory of Arthavadas unanimously accepted by our Acharyas is borne in mind. In Puranas, many of the Vedic Arthavadas have been expanded and developed poetically. Puranas are not ancient history. So, there is nothing abnormal

or unusual if Upasanas do not deal with Truth. Vedas also provide means, which will confer enjoyments, for many do not hanker after Truth. Brahma Vidya which occurs in all the Upanishads deals with Truth, its nature and the means to attain it. See No. 158.

PART B–TO NIVRITTI

Turn to Jnana

१७०. अतः अशेषोपद्रवबीजस्य अज्ञानस्य निवृत्त्यर्थं विधूतसर्वोपाधिविशेषात्मदर्शनार्थं आरभ्यते "ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परं" इत्यादि ॥ अस्मात् विज्ञानात् सर्वात्मब्रह्मविषयात् आत्यन्तिकः संसारोपरमः प्रयोजनम् ॥ निर्ज्ञातयोः हि संबन्धप्रयोजनयोः विद्याश्रवणग्रहणधारणाभ्यासार्थं प्रवर्तते ।

170. Therefore, for the complete recovery from that ignorance (of the Self) which is the seed of misery in life, this (chapter) begins with the statement that "the knower of Brahman attains the Supreme." The benefit accruing from this Brahman Jnana is recovery from ignorance (of the Self); from this results the absolute cessation of Samsara (rebirths etc.). One proceeds to hear, comprehend and remember and practise without interruption the Vidya (inculcated in the Upanishads) only when its connection (to life) and its benefits are well understood. (Tai. 2-1-1).

Note:—It is a fundamental proposition with Sankara, that only knowing the benefits of any course prompts man to resort to it. Fruits are there, high or low. But only with non-attachment to fruits does the spiritual life begin. Mimamsakas posit a category of Karmas without any result—the Nitya Karmas. Sankara affirms that all categories of Karmas have results. Only the knowledge of results prompts one to act but detachment should be maintained along with the effort.

१७१. विज्ञाते हि श्रेयः प्रतिबन्धकारणे तदपनयनाय यत्नः आरब्धुं शक्यते नान्यथा ।

171. Indeed, only when the course of the obstacle to one's own good is well realised, it becomes possible to put forth effort for its removal, not otherwise. (Ka. IV Intro.).

Note:—A Sadhaka has to put forth effort to conquer and calm his mind, etc., even after he ceases from doing rituals. Spiritual Sadhana does not mean passivity. One has to understand the real obstacle and conquer it. Desire is the obstacle that disturbs the mind. He gives up rituals to engage himself exclusively in these efforts.

१७२. व्यावृत्तं चक्षुः श्रोत्रादिकं इन्द्रियजातं अशेषविषयात् यस्य सः आवृत्तचक्षुः । स एव संस्कृतः । प्रत्यगात्मनं पश्यति । महता प्रयासेन स्वभावप्रवृत्तिनिरोधं कृत्वा प्रत्यगात्मानं पश्यति ।

172. He is to be called "the one seeing inwards," whose eyes, ears and other senses have completely turned back from the objects. One who is thus purified, realises the inner self. With great exertion and effort and having restrained the natural outward-going tendency, one sees the inner self. (Ka. 4-1).

Note:—So the most important thing for success in spiritual life is the drawing in of the senses. All one's efforts are to go for this achievement and not for the scrupulous observance of rituals which have a tendency to take the mind just the contrary way. This in fact corresponds to Pratyahara, the fifth step of the Yoga of Patanjali. There are eight steps in all.

Rituals may cease and do cease when one turns to higher religion but not personal effort for self-control. Cessation of Karma does not mean passivity in spiritual life. Even effort ceases when conquest has been achieved, i.e. in the highest state. Even then, there is spontaneous activity for the service of the world without involving any strain or sense of effort.

A different psychology for Jnana

१७३. पार्थगर्थ्यमेव उपासनावाक्यानां ब्रह्मवाक्यानां च न्याय्यं, न एक वाक्यत्वम् ।

173. It is quite reasonable to conclude that different purposes are meant to be served by passages concerning devout meditation on the one hand and passages relating to meditation on Brahman on the other. The two sets of passages do not constitute an integral or unified whole. (S.B. III-2-21). See 169 and 177 A.

Note:—Mere Upasana requires concentration, but not loss of egoism. Brahma Jnana (realisation of Self) requires not merely concentration but purity of mind and the death of ego. By Upasana, one attains Siddhis and prosperity: by Jnana one "sees" the reality.

Introduction to 174 :

Another characteristic of Dhyana is given below in 174 A, and how Jnana differs from it is stated in B.

१७४ (ए) ध्यानं चिन्तनं यद्यपि मानसं तथापि पुरुषेण कर्तुं अकर्तुं अन्यथा वा कर्तुं शक्यं पुरुषतन्त्रत्वात् ।

यथा चः—" पुरुषो वा व गौतमाग्निः, योषा वा गौतमाग्निः " इत्यत्र योषित्पुरुषयोः अग्निबुद्धिः मानसी भवति, केवलचोदनाजन्यत्वात क्रियैव सा, पुरुषतन्त्रा च ।

(बी) या तु प्रसिद्धे अग्नौ अग्निबुद्धिः, न सा चोदनातन्त्रा नापि पुरुषतन्त्र । किं तर्हि, प्रत्यक्षविषयवस्तुतन्त्रैवेति ज्ञानमेव तत् न क्रिया । एवं सर्व प्रमाणविषयवस्तुषु वेदितव्यम् ।

174 A. Dhyana or concentration on a mental image, though a mental act, purely depends on the initiative of man. So, it can be done by man, can be neglected by man, or done by him in a wrong manner, for it purely depends on the activity of

man. For instance, injunctions like "Gautama, conceive man as fire" and "Gautama, conceive woman as fire." In these the imagining of man or woman as fire is purely a mental act: this is born out of a Vedic injunction. In fact, it is a Kriya as it is dependent on man (his activity). (S.B. 1-1-4).

B. But, seeing the well-known fire as fire is not born of a Vedic injunction nor is it dependent on the imagination of man. But it depends on the natural function of the eye on an external object, the fire and its natural qualities. So there is "knowledge" here and not "Kriya." Similarly in regard to every sense organ in relation to its respective object. (S.B. 1-1-4).

Note:—The great difference between knowledge and the process of meditation is brought out here. Seeing is a natural act. Seeing fire naturally as fire is an instance of knowledge which every creature has. But to imagine "a man as fire" is done because the Vedas have so ordered it. But for the Veda Vidhi, man will not look on man as "fire".

There is an Upanishadic Vidya known as "Pancha Agni Vidya"—imagining five things as fire. Two of these things to be imagined as fire are man and woman. This occurs in chapters 5-7-8 of Chandogya Upanishad.

१७५ (ए) कर्तृत्वादिसर्वसंसारधर्मनिराकरणे हि ब्रह्मणः आत्मत्वोपदेशः ।

(बी) तदनिराकरणेन च उपासनाविधानम् । अतश्च उपासकस्य प्रतीकैः समत्वात् आत्मग्रहः नोपपद्यते ।

175. A For the instruction that Brahman is the Self depends on doing away with actorship and all other characteristics of transmigratory existence.

B. Upasanas are enjoined when these are not discarded. So, the Upasaka attains identity with the Pratika (Symbol adopted for Brahman) and not identity with Self.

Note:—This brings out clearly the purport of No. 173. The problem for the mind in each is different. The difference pointed out here between Upasana and Jnana is very important.

१७६. कर्मगोचरात् साध्यसाधनलक्षणात् अनित्यात् विरक्तस्यैव आत्मज्ञाने अधिकारः ।

176. Ony those who are disgusted with the transitory things which result from Karma with its means and ends have competency to take up (the Sadhanas for) Atma Jnana. (Ka-1-20).

Note:—This brings out the meaning of No. 173 still more clearly. In Upasana, in spite of all concentration man is extrovert. In Jnana Nishtha he becomes introvert. So in fact the two imply two opposite viewpoints. How can these have integral aim then?

१७७ (ए) विद्या दैवं वित्तं, दैवतयिषयं ज्ञानं कर्मसंबन्धित्वेन उपन्यस्तं न परमात्म ज्ञानम् ।

(बी) विद्याशब्देन मुख्या परमात्मविधैव कस्मान्न गृह्यते ? अमृतत्वं च परमात्मविद्यायाः कर्मणश्च विरोधात् समुच्चयानुपपत्तिः, हेतुस्वरूप-फलविरोधात् । विद्योत्पत्तौ तदाश्रये अविद्यानुपपत्तेः ।

(सी) अमृतमश्नुते इत्यापेक्षिकममृतम् ।

177. A. What is spoken of here as capable of combining with Karma (rituals) is Vidya which is meditation in connection with Devatas and not "knowledge of the Self." For, a different result is predicated here by the text "By meditation Devaloka—abode of God—is attained." (Ish-Intro.). See 169 and 173.

B. Why not assign to the term Vidya its chief (well-known) sense "knowledge of Paramatman" and to Amritatvam also (its well-known meaning)? Because of the opposition (mutually excluding outlook) that subsists between Paramatma Jnana and the performance of Karma? It is impossible for these to

combine, for they are opposed to each other in regard to their causes, nature and results. When Atma Jnana dawns in an individual, it is impossible for Avidya to co-exist (in the same individual).

C. In the passage "Attains immortality," the reference is to "relative immortality." (Ish. Conclusion).

Note to A:—Here the Sanskrit word "Jnana" denotes "meditation." See Nos. 158 and 169.

Note to C.:—The relative immortality is the attainment of Heaven or Brahmaloka, etc. The life in these is much longer than life on earth and more glorious, but it does entail rebirth.

१७८ (ए) रहस्यसामान्यात् मनोवृत्तिसामान्याच्च-यथा अद्वैतज्ञानं मनोवृत्तिमात्रं तथा अन्यान्युपासनानि मनोवृत्तिरूपाणि इत्यास्ति हि सामान्यम् ।

(बी) कस्तर्हि अद्वैतज्ञानस्य उपासनानां च विशेषः ? उच्यते-स्वाभाविकस्य आत्मनि अक्रिये अध्यारोपितस्य कर्त्रादिकारक-क्रियाफलभेदविज्ञानस्य निवर्तकं अद्वैतविज्ञानम् ।

(सी) उपासनं तु यथाशास्त्रसमर्थितं किंचिदालम्बनमुपादाय तस्मिन् समानचित्तवृत्तिसंतानकरणं, तद्विलक्षणप्रत्ययानन्तरितं इति विशेषः ।

(डी) तान्येतान्युपासनानि सत्वशुद्धिकरत्वेन वस्तुतत्वावभासकत्वात अद्वैतज्ञानोपकारकाणि, आलम्बनविषयत्वात् सुखसाध्यानि च ।

178. A. Along with the subject matter of meditation for the attainment of the Non-dual, are found mentioned certain other meditations which are meant to bring about prosperity; because they are similar in that both are matters beyond sense perception, also both are of the nature of mentations. Just as realisation of non-duality is just a pure functioning of the mind, so also other meditations are functionings of the mind. Here is the similarity.

B. What then is the difference between the meditations and the process of realisation of Non-duality? We explain that

the Self is by nature a non-actor, but on it is super-imposed the consciousness of various differences as to actor, action, its factors and its fruits, etc. These super-impositions are removed by the realisation of the Non-dual Self.

C. Whereas Upasana or meditation is the keeping up of a continuous flow of the same idea on a certain prop which has been prescribed by Sastra, the flow of the same idea is not broken in by any foreign idea. Such is the difference between the two.

D. These meditations, serving to purify one's mind and thereby illuminating the real nature of things, are a help to the realisation of Non-duality. Inasmuch as they are supported by props, they are easier to practise. (Ch. Intro.).

Note:— B. points out a quality imported into meditation described in C. For realisation of Self, the meditation should destroy ego-sense.

१७९ (ए) "अभिध्यायतेः" अयथाभूतमपि वस्तु कर्म भवति ।
मनोरथकल्पितस्यापि "अभिध्यायति" कर्मत्वात् ।
(बी) "ईक्षतेस्तु" तथाभूतमेव खलु वस्तु लोके कर्मदृष्टमित्यतः
परमात्मैवायं सम्यग्दर्शनविषयभूत "ईक्षति" कर्मत्वेन व्यपदिष्टः
इति गम्यते ।

179. A. Now, for an act of "meditation," an unreal thing also can be an object—even an object which is a pure product of the imagination of one's mind can be an object of "meditation."

B. But, of the act of "seeing", real things only are the objects, as is the case with our (right) sense experience; so it is to be concluded that the highest (and only real) Self is the object of "Samyag Darsana" (seeing well, right knowledge and complete intuition); the word "sees" denotes the experience of Reality. (S.B. 1-3-13).

Note:—The contrast brought out here has to be thoroughly understood. Jnana Nishtha too has all the apparent features of meditation; but Jnana, the real insight into Reality (an act similar to seeing a table in front, in our ordinary state), destroys all illusion cast on Jiva till now, just as light destroys the darkness of even millions of years. Here the distinction between Karma, Dhyana (Upasana) and Jnana may be stated in brief.

Karma, whether secular or religious, is born of the ignorance of the Self when one does not know that real bliss is hidden in oneself, and hence is the desire for outside fruits; no question of search for truth, i.e. inside bliss, comes into play. Karma is purely dependent on man's actions with the aid of outside material things. It involves also the sense of actorship and desire for outside fruits.

Dhyana or Upasana is also born of ignorance and desire. The aim here is also not discovery of Truth but some enjoyment. But the means do not depend on any outside material but here one's own mind alone is used. The objective is won by powerfull concentration. The sense of actorship continues.

Jnana inculcated by Sastras or religions is a new insight, but not with the aid of our five senses and the ordinary mind. The field of this insight transcends the mind and the sense अतीन्द्रिय-विषयः. The aid here as in Upasana is the concentrated mind, but mind here is devoid of any desire or attachment to worldly things. It is hungering after Truth alone. It is thirsting for a correct knowledge or insight into Reality.

१८० (ए) एकमपि ब्रह्म अपेक्षितोपाधिसम्बन्धं निरस्तोपाधिसम्बन्धं च उपास्यत्वेन ज्ञेयत्वेन च वेदान्तेषु उपदिश्यते ।

(बी) द्विरूपं हि ब्रह्मावगम्यते, नामरूपविकारभेदोपाधिविशिष्टं तद्विपरीतं च सर्वोपाधिविवर्जितम् ।

(सी) विद्याऽविद्याविषयभेदेन ब्रह्मणो द्विरूपता, तत्र अविद्यावस्थायां ब्रह्मणः उपास्योपासकादिलक्षणः सर्वो व्यवहारः।

180. A. The Vedanta texts teach that even though there is only one Brahman, He is described as if He is with limiting conditions as also that He is devoid of all such conditions. In the first instance, He is the object of meditation, in the second He is the object of (right) knowledge.

B. Brahman is apprehended in two forms; in the first place as qualified by limiting conditions owing to the multiformity of the evolution of name and form (the multiformity of the created world); in the second place as being the opposite of this, i.e. free from all limiting conditions whatever.

C. The double nature of Brahman ensues from the fact that He is the object of either "knowledge" or of ignorance. When one (the meditator) is in a state of ignorance (of the nature of the Brahman), the categories like Upasya (the object of meditation) and the Upasaka (one who meditates) and all such others ensue. (S.B. 1-1-12).

१८१. फलनिरपेक्षज्ञानकर्मसमुच्चयानुष्ठानात कृतात्मसंस्कारस्य उच्छिन्नात्मज्ञान-प्रतिबन्धकस्य आत्मस्वरूपतत्वविज्ञानाय केनमारभ्यते ।

181. The Kena (Upanishad) is begun for giving the clearest idea about the nature and truth of Atman for such as those whose minds have been purified by conjoint practice of Karmas and Upasanas without attachment to fruits and thus whose obstacles for the realisation of Truth have been cleared. (Ke. V-Intro.).

Note:—Here also the word Jnana is used in the sense of Upasana, as in No. 177. Here is also the suggestion that many of the Upasanas have only the same psychology of Karma and so can well unite with Karma, but the highest Upasana which is meant for the realisation of Self cannot go with Karma. Another point to be noted here is that Nishkama Karmas and Upasanas alike lose their nature of Pravritti and attain the nature of Nivritti and thus become conducive to Self-knowledge.

१८२. आत्मज्ञानं तु विज्ञानानपेक्षम् । कस्मात्? विज्ञानस्वरूपत्वात् ।

182. Self-realisation does not depend on any kind of consciousness. Its nature itself is consciousness or awareness. (Ke. V Intro.).

Note:—Consciousness is a function of the mind and its expression is knowledge. But in Self-realisation one has gone beyond the mind. Yet there is awareness. So is Atman, Chit, i.e. the nature of Atman is consciousness (in addition to existence and bliss).

The knowledge gained by the mind is, so to say, a percolation of the awareness of Atman through the mind.

Process of Knowledge

१८३. आत्मज्ञानेन किं अमृतत्वं उत्पाद्यते? न,
किं तर्हि? स्वेनैव नित्यात्मस्वभावेन अमृतत्वं विन्दते,
न आलम्बनपूर्वकम् । यदि हि, विद्योत्पाद्यं अमृतत्वं
स्यात् अनित्यं भवेत् कर्मकार्यवत् विद्या अनात्मविज्ञानं निवर्तयति ।

183. Is immortality "produced" by Self-knowledge? No. How does it come then? Immortality is attained because of the eternal nature of the Self. It is not produced by any other support (means). If immortality is the product of Vidya, it will be non-eternal just like the result of a ritual or activity. Vidya removes the identification with non-self. (Ke. 2-4).

Note:—The analogy of the cataract of the eye in the section "Para and Apara Vidya" of the Introduction to this chapter will make the purport clearer.

Doing of Yajnas (sacrifices here) brings about residence in Heaven after death. Yajnas thus confer an unseen result. Similar is not the result of Jnana, even with the difference that its result occurs in this life and not after death. It is like seeing a lost coin when the torch light is flashed there. The coin was

there and was not produced by the flash light. Only it was not seen in the darkness. Atman too is ever-existing. Cataract is like the darkness. Jnana is like the flash light inherent in oneself. This flash light, latent till now, becomes patent by proper meditation (stillness of the mind).

१८४. अविद्याकृतानात्मापोहार्थत्वात् । या हि ब्रह्मविषया स्वात्मप्राप्तिरुपादिश्यते, सा अविद्याकृतस्य अन्नादिविशेषात्मनः आत्मत्वेन अध्यारोपितस्य अनात्मनः अपोहार्थम् । विद्यायाश्च दृष्टं कार्यमविद्या निवृत्तिः

184. The purpose of Atma Jnana is the removal of the non-self created by Avidya (ignorance of self). The attainment of Self by Brahma Vidya which has been taught, is but the removal of the non-self created by Avidya by the superimposition of the physical body, etc. as the Self. (Tai. II 6-5).

It is a matter within our ken that knowledge removes ignorance.

Note : Note to 183 may be useful here also.

१८५. न तत्त्वमसि वाक्यार्थात् प्रच्याव्य आवृत्तौ प्रवर्तयेत् ।
"नियुक्तस्य च, अस्मिन् अधिकृतः अहं कर्ता मयेदं कर्तव्यं" इति, अवश्यं ब्रह्मप्रत्ययात् विपरीतप्रत्ययः उत्पद्यते ।
यस्तु स्वयमेव मन्दमतिः अप्रतिभानात् तं वाक्यार्थं जिहासेत् तस्य एतस्मिन्नेव वाक्यार्थे स्थिरीकारः आवृत्यादिवाचोयुक्त्या अभ्युपेयते ।

185. One must not be moved towards repetition of the mantras in such a way as to make one lose the true sense of the sentence "Thou art That." If in this repetition ideas arise "that I have been enjoined to do this, I have competency to do it, I am the agent of this act, and I have a duty to do this," then there inevitably arise notions opposed to (right) notions of Brahman.

But if one, naturally slow-minded, is about to lose from his mind the purport of this sentence, because it does not reveal itself to him, it is natural to fortify him in the understanding of

the sense of that sentence, by means of repetition of it, etc. (S.B. IV 1-2).

Note :—The attitude of mind in Karma and Jnana are entirely different—see Nos. 173 and 179. Jnana Nishtha begins with the denial of the ego and its accompaniment, actorship and desire for result. When the assumption of this attitude is difficult, the meditation and repetition of the Mantra "Tat Twam Asi" brings about this attitude of non-actorship etc. gradually. This is the rationale for repetition of this mantra in Jnana Nishtha. For other factors of Mantra Japa see No. 321.

The Result of Jnana

१८६. सद्यो मुक्तिकारणं आत्मज्ञानम् ।

186. Knowledge of the Self (Self-realisation) leads to instantaneous realisation (here and now). (S.B. 1-1-12, Intro.).

Note :—There is "only one" result for true Jnana. That is Self-realisation. Upasanas have various results.

१८७ ज्ञानात् मोक्ष इति च सर्वोपनिषदां सिद्धान्तः ।

187. The proposition established by all Upanishads is that final release results from knowledge. (Chh. 2-23).

Note :—Sankara goes so far as to say that this is the only teaching of all Upanishads. Other matters found therein are by the way.

१८८. (ए) ज्ञानस्य हि एषा परा निष्ठा यदात्मैकत्वविज्ञानम् ।

(बी) सगुणासु विद्यासु गतिरर्थवती, न निर्गुणायां परमात्मविद्यायाम् ।

188. A. The realisation that there is but one Self (in all) is the supreme aim of discipline of Jnana (knowledge).

B. Going (to Heaven, etc.) happens as a result of Saguna meditation. But this going, etc. can never be associated with the results of Nirguna Vidya (meditation of the attributeless Atman). (Ka. 2-8).

Note :—We hear of rebirths and going to higher worlds, etc. Meditation as such cannot end this Samsara or going to the Lokas. But when a man realises by Jnana, he does not go anywhere because he has nowhere to go. He has become all.

So when results are mentioned to Upasanas, as going to higher Lokas, the Upasana is Sagunopasana, the lower Upasana.

१८९ (ए) यत्र हि निरस्तसर्वविशेषसम्बन्धम् परं ब्रह्मात्मत्वेन उपदिश्यते तत्र एकरूपमेव फलं मोक्षः ।

(बी) यत्र तु गुणविशेषसम्बन्धं प्रतीकविशेषसम्बन्धं वा ब्रह्मोपदिश्यते तत्र संसारगोचराण्येव उच्चावचानि फलानि दृश्यन्ते ।

189. A. Whenever the highest Brahman, free from all connections with distinguishing attributes, is represented as one's own Self, there is only one result, viz. the final release.

B. But wherever Brahman is taught as connected with distinguishing attributes or outward symbols, the rewards mentioned are to be within Samsara (leading to rebirth, etc.) whether these be of a very high or low order. (S.B. 1-1-24).

१९०. प्रत्यक्षफलत्वात ज्ञानस्य फलविरहाशङ्कानुपपत्तिः । कर्मफलं हि स्वर्गादावनुभवानारूढे स्यादाशङ्का भवेद्वा नवेति । अनुभवारूढं तु ज्ञानफलम् ।

190. Since the result of knowledge (Self-realisation) is immediate (to be experienced here and now like sense perception) there is no reason to fear as to getting the result at all. Indeed in the case of results of Karmas (rituals) like attainment of heaven, etc. which do not come within one's experience, there is reason for doubt whether they will ensue or not. But the result of "knowledge" is within the ken of experience. (S.B. III 3-32).

Note :—Result of Jnana is certain as it can be experienced in this life. Thus it is different from the rewards of Karma to be attained in heaven after death. So, why not take up the sure step instead of the doubtful one?

१९१. प्राणादिविज्ञानं केवलं कर्मसमुच्चितं वा सकामस्य प्राणात्मप्राप्त्यर्थमेव भवति ।

191. The meditation on Prana (Hiranyagarbha), alone or in combination with rituals and when actuated by desire for results, leads only to the identification of the devotee with Prana. (Ken. Intro. Ke. V).

Note :—For two reasons which are inter-connected, the Sadhaka does not attain Self-realisation. First he hankers not for Truth but for enjoyment, and secondly, as such, his conception of God is necessarily lower. Such a meditation can well go along with Karma.

Here "Vijnana" like Jnana (No. 158) means "meditation."

This saying is put here once more to bring out the contrast between the lower and higher meditation.

१९२ (ए) सगुणासु तावद्विद्यासु वाक्यविशेषे ऐश्वर्यप्राप्तिः पापनिवृत्तिश्च विद्यावतः उच्यते ।

(बी) निर्गुणायां तु विद्यायां अकर्त्रात्मत्वबोधात् कर्मप्रदाहासिद्धिः पूर्वसिद्ध कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वविपरीतं हि त्रिष्वपि कालेषु अकर्तृत्वाभोक्तृत्वस्वरूपं "ब्रह्माहमस्मि न इतः पूर्वमपि कर्ता भोक्ता वा अहमास्मि न इदानीं नापि भविष्यत्काले" इति ब्रह्मवित अवगच्छति ।

(सी) एवमेव च मोक्ष उपपद्यते ।

(डी) न च देशकालनिमित्तापेक्षः मोक्षः कर्मफलवत् भवितुं अर्हति :

(इ) अन्यथा हि अनादिकालप्रवृत्तानां कर्मणां क्षयाभावे मोक्षाभाव स्यात् ।

(एफ) परोक्षत्वानुपपत्तेश्च ज्ञानफलस्य ।

192. A. In the case of meditation on the qualified Brahman, the corresponding complementary passages declare that those who do such meditations obtain lordly power and cessation of all sin.

B. But in the case of Vidyas referring to Brahman devoid of qualities, the destruction of all work follows from the cogni-

tion that our true Self is not an agent, just contrary to past ideas of actor and enjoyer. There arises the awareness that "I am Brahman and my nature is not either that of doer or enjoyer in all the three times (past, present or future)." The knower of Brahman experiences that he was never an actor or enjoyer in the past, nor is he one now nor shall be one in the future.

C. It is but appropriate that Moksha (release) should be as thus described.

D. Nor can final release be dependent on place, time or special causes, as the fruit of works (rituals) is.

E. Otherwise if the chain of works which have been running on from eternity could not be cut short, release could never take place.

F. The fruit of knowledge (Moksha) cannot rightly therefore be one beyond our present experience. (S.B. IV 1-13).

१९३. प्रकाशे इव घटादिः विद्यायां सत्यां आविर्भवाति ।
तस्मादन्यत्यागेन आत्मप्रार्थनैव आत्मलाभसाधनम् ॥

193. Just as pots, etc., manifest themselves in the presence of light, on the dawn of Vidya, Atman manifests its own nature. Therefore the intense wish for the realisation of the Atman, after renouncing all others, is alone the means for the attainment of the Atman. (Mu. 6-3).

CHAPTER IV

JNANA NISHTHA, YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

Introduction

Sankara calls this also by the name Para Vidya or Atma Vidya. The word Vidya used in this connection tells us that this is but a higher evolution of the Upasana. Here the object of concentration is Brahman or Atman or Truth and not any other imagery enjoined by the Vedic texts to be conceived by us for a particular meditation, for example, the Sacrificial Horse described at the opening of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. It may once more be stated that the objectives of the two are far different. In Jnana Nishtha the search is for absolute Truth and nothing else. In Upasana the aim is a status in some higher world or more subtle enjoyment lasting for a much longer period than the ones conferred by Karma.

Brahma Vidya or Jnana Yoga is not the result accruing from the study of the chief religious books. A deep mastery of these books or a great proficiency to expound them is nothing in this context; nor is it clarity of thinking and extreme dexterity in reasoning about the intricate points of Vedanta. Yet the study of these books or hearing of the exposition of their vital points from the mouth of a realised guru, teacher, is an essential preliminary.

Steps in Jnana Nishtha

The greatest obstacle to Jnana Nishtha is the deep attachment to rituals and their results. The rituals, as they have been propounded by the Vedas, have cast a deadly spell on man. That the rituals are causes of bondage is not easily seen or conceded. The heavenly prosperity or other benefits they may confer are but ephemeral; but this is not understood. Only the hearing

of the glorious truth of Atman or Brahman and the conviction born as a consequence, has the power to cast off their deadly spell. This hearing is called Sravana and forms the first step.

Manana, consideration of the pros and cons till a conviction is born, is the next step. This conviction is a plant of slow growth. The Vasanas (impressions) imbedded in man's mind by his Kama (desire), Krodha (anger) and their brood, are enemies to the birth of this conviction. They have to be conquered. This can be done by conscious and persistent effort to cultivate ethical excellences and qualities which counteract the vices of the mind or the Vasanas. Nishkamata, absense of desire, Akrodha, the cultivation of the absence of anger by restraining whenever it arises, etc., have to be cultivated.

Karma Yoga has its place here, when actions, rituals and others are done without attachment to the fruits and the very Kama (desire) which promoted this action is restrained and sublimated. The mind is thereby purified. Now the purified mind will understand the spiritual truths all the better and become ready to strive towards the realisation of Atman.

Ethics

Now the other steps prescribed in the Gita for becoming a Sthitaprajna, the steadfast one in knowledge, for becoming a Gunatita (one who has transcended Satwa, Rajas and Tamo Gunas) and for becoming a Bhakta, have all to be practised. These are given in Chapter II, Nos. 55 to 72, Chapter XIV, 22 to 26, and Chapter XII, Nos. 13 to 20 of the Gita, respectively. Also the Jnana Sadhanas mentioned in Chapter XIII, Nos. 6 to 11, of the Gita (see quotations under Appendix) deserve due attention here. Sankara says that cultivation of these alone brings about Jnanaparipaka, the ripening of knowledge, i.e., moral excellence.

The Upanishads teach about the futility of Karma, and advocate the importance of ethical qualities. But the Gita is

emphatic in denouncing mere rituals (Chapter II, Nos. 42-46 and Chapter IX, Nos. 20-21) and, as pointed out above (see under No. 11), strongly advocates the supreme necessity for developing Atma Gunas. But if Sankara is merciless in his exposure of the hollowness of rituals, he is equally ardent about perfecting ethical qualities. It is very doubtful whether any other teacher in the world has been so emphatic in discarding rituals and advocating the supreme importance of ethics as the fundamental basis of spiritual life.

Higher Meditation

But the final step has yet to be taken. The Vidya (meditation) side of Brahma Vidya has to play its part. None of the above steps can become firm until, by concentration on Atman or God, the veil is broken by the bursting of the illumination of Truth. Sankara defines Jnana Nishtha as "प्रत्यगात्माविषयप्रत्यय-सन्तानकरणाभिनिवेशश्च ज्ञाननिष्ठा, the passionate longing to have continuous flow of thought or idea regarding the inner self." This continuous unbroken flow of idea constitutes Nididhyasa or Vidya. This alone rends the veil, when Atman or God or Truth shines in its innate glory and brilliance, the darkness of ignorance with its brood of Vasanas being destroyed. When Vasanas are scorched, Kama and Krodha can no more sprout. The man shines in his inherent glory of Satchidananda. His ego is dissolved; his individuality has vanished. He has become all. This Sarvatmabhava, the Atman becoming identical with all, is the consummation of Jnana Nishtha.

It may be asked, has not Sankara altogether dispensed with the great importance of Bhakti? It has been already pointed out that Sankara showed by his life itself that he was not an advocate of quietism or passivity. The various Stotras that he has left behind are equally an eloquent witness of his deep Bhakti. But what is more, while giving his beauti-

ful, lucid and direct exposition of Jnana Nishtha in Gita XVIII-55 (commentary) he states "ज्ञाननिष्ठा परा भक्तिरित्युच्यते, Jnana Nishtha is itself the highest form of Bhakti." For, is there not in Jnana Nishtha also that passionate longing for and concentration on Atman? Jnana Nishtha is not a cold, heartless process, as many think. It is the extremely concentrated passion for Atman. Sankara says elsewhere that Bhakti to personal God, when it fully ripens will lead to impersonal God, Brahmatma Bhava and Sarvatma Bhava. To Sankara, as he expressly says, Jnana Nishtha and Bhakti are one in essence ultimately.

Reality of the World

Introduction :

There is an oft-repeated Vedantic saying "Jagat is Mithya" (the world is an illusion). This is one of the most misunderstood ideas of Vedanta. Sayings Nos. 194 to 197 are Sankara's assertions to the contrary, viz. that the world is real. As long as the body is real to us so long the world also is real to us. The world is an obstinate fact before realisation of the Atman or Brahman.

The great mistake made is, that the statement is taken to mean that the world alone is unreal, while we unconsciously feel that our body and senses are real. That this is a wrong idea, is emphatically asserted by Sankara.

In deep sleep the world does not exist for the sleeper. Even if he has excruciating pain before sleep, it does not exist for him in his deep sleep. When he regains his body sense, the pain reappears. Body reality and world reality go and come together. The same applies with greater force in the case of superconscious state. But after the stabilisation of superconscious experience, there is identity with all. So the old world of multiplicity and difference is gone for good.

Even when the sages come down to lower level, this new experience of unity of all in the universe does not desert them. This is the difference between sleep and Sahaja Samadhi. As a matter of fact, the world to them is God and no more the grim old world. It is this new and everlasting experience that makes them state "Jagat is Mithya"—the world is unreal. For a man in Avidya, the world is certainly real, but not so for a man in Vidya. Read in the light of these explanations, sayings Nos. 194, 195, 196, and 197 will become clear.

The charge against the "Maya Vada" of Vedantins like Sankara arises out of the misunderstanding dealt with above.

१९४ (ए) सर्वव्यवहाराणामेव प्राक् ब्रह्मात्मविज्ञानात् सत्यत्वोपपत्तेः, स्वप्नव्यवहारस्य प्राक् प्रबोधात् ।

(बी) प्राक् प्रबोधात् संसारित्वाभिगमः ।

194. A. Before coming by realisation it is but proper to regard all (our worldly activities) as real, just as our activities in dream seem real to us till we wake up. (S.B. II-1-14).

B. Before the dawn of realisation we have to concede the reality of Samsara (the world of senses). (S.B. IV-1-3).

Note :—Till one realises, one will be subject to the influence of joy and sorrow.

१९५. न च द्वैतस्य अनृतत्वबुद्धिः प्रथममेव कस्याचित्स्यात् ।

195. Nobody thinks from the very outset that duality is false. (Br. V-1-1. Intr.).

१९६. प्राक् ब्रह्मात्मत्वदर्शनात् विषयादिप्रपञ्चो व्यवस्थितरूपो भवति ।

196. Prior to the realisation of the identity of Atman with Brahman, the world of senses and other things have their definite form.

१९७. देहात्मप्रत्ययो यद्वत् प्रमाणत्वेन कल्पितः लौकिकं तद्वदेवेदं प्रमाणं त्वात्मानिश्चयात् ।

197. As long as the idea of the Self is identified with body consciousness, so long i.e. till the realisation of (the true nature of) Atman, the world perception, the reality of the world, is also equally valid. (S.B. 1-4).

Avidya and Karma

१९८. देहादिसंघाते आत्माभिमानो अविद्यात्मकः ।

198. The identifying of the Self with the aggregate of the body, etc., is the core of Avidya or ignorance. (G. 18-66).

१९९. भ्रान्तिप्रत्ययनिमित्तः एवायं संसारभ्रमो नतु परमार्थः (सम्यक् दर्शनात अत्यन्तमेव उपरमः ।)

199. The illusion of Samsara is due solely to an illusory notion and is not an absolute reality. (Right knowledge brings about absolute cessation of Samsara). (G. XIII-2).

२०० फलार्थित्वात् अविद्वान् प्रवर्तते ।

200. The ignorant man, longing for results, engages in action. (G. 13-2).

Note :—This applies even to the performer of Vedic Nitya Karma and ordinary Varnasrama Dharmas or Karmas of Smritis (codes of conduct) for the Varnas (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, etc.).

२०१ यः पुनः कर्ताहमिति वेत्यात्मानं तस्य ममेदं कर्तव्यं, इत्यवश्यंभाविनी बुद्धिः स्यात्, तदपेक्षया सोऽधिक्रियते इति तं प्रति कर्माणि संभवन्ति स च अविद्वान् ।

201. In the case of one who regards himself as the doer of actions, there will necessarily arise the idea that he has this or that thing to do. Because of such an idea he becomes qualified for actions and on him are actions enjoined. (G. II-21).

Note :—The implications of the term "Avidya" as used in Vedanta are well brought out here. See No. 86.

२०२ यानि कर्माणि शास्त्रेण विधीयन्ते तान्यपि अविदुषो विहितानि ।

202. The Karmas (rituals) which are enjoined by the Scriptures are intended for the unenlightened. (G. II-21).

Note:—There is a common idea that since a Karma has been sanctioned and approved by Sastra, it cannot cause bondage. This statement roots out this wrong idea. The bondage caused by Vedic Karmas may be weaker. These yet forge golden fetters.

२०३ आत्मविदो निवृत्तमिथ्याज्ञानत्वात्, विपर्ययज्ञानमूलस्य कर्मयोगस्य असंभवः स्यात ।

203. For a man of Self-realisation, because he is free from illusory knowledge, Karmayoga, based on illusion, must be impossible. (G. 5-Intr.).

Note :—The reference here is to a Siddha and not to a Sadhaka.

२०४. किमर्थं तर्हि भक्तैः पूजादिलक्षणं, यागदानहोमादिकं च सुकृतं प्रयुज्यते इत्याह । अज्ञानेनावृतं विवेकज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति करोमि इत्येवं मोहं गच्छन्ति अविवेकिनः ।

204. With what object are meritorious rituals like worship, sacrifice, gifts and offerings of oblations to fire, etc., performed? Because discriminative knowledge is enveloped by ignorance. Thereby the ignorant mortal creatures in Samsara are deluded and think "I act" (I cause to act, I shall enjoy, I cause to enjoy and so on). (G. V-15).

Note :—Even praiseworthy acts like worship, etc., cause bondage if done with desire, as is usually the case. The warning given in this and No. 205 has to be well kept in mind and non-attachment cultivated.

२०५. भगवत्कर्मकारिणो ये युक्ततमा अपि, कर्मिणो अज्ञाः, उदारास्त्रयोप्यज्ञाः ।

205. Men performing rituals to God, in spite of their great devotion, are but ritualists and unenlightened. The three sorts

of Bhaktas, even though noble, indeed are unenlightened yet. (G. 18-66).

Note :—The three sorts of Bhaktas are the one who is in distress, the one who seeks to know and the one who desires ardently for various possessions. (G. VII-16).

Nitya Karma

२०६. यावत् ध्यानावरोहणासमर्थः तावत् गृहस्थेन अधिकृतेन कर्तव्यं कर्म ।

206. As long as he is unable to ascend to Dhyana Yoga (Yoga of meditation) the householder, on whom action, rites or duties are enjoined, should perform them. (G. 6-Intr.)

२०७. नित्यस्य च कर्मणो, वेदप्रमाणावबुद्धत्वात् फलेन भवितव्यं अन्यथा वेदस्य आनर्थक्यप्रसंगः ।

207. The Nitya Karma (life-long acts) taught on the authority of the Vedas must produce a result of its own. Else the Vedas would be deemed purposeless.

२०८. न, नित्यानां कर्मणां अभावादेव भावरूपस्य प्रत्यवायस्य उत्पत्तिः कल्पयितुं शक्या युक्ता च ।

208. It is indeed impossible, nay unreasonable, to imagine the generation of sin—which is a Bhava or positive effect—out of the omission of life-long rites or duties, which is an Abhava or mere negation. (G. III-Intr.).

Note :—See Introduction to Chapter II section "Jaimini's prescription for Moksha," as also note to No. 103.

Antithesis between Karma and Jnana

२०९. अविद्याकृतत्वात् बन्धस्य विद्यया मोक्ष उपपद्यते ।

209. As ignorance (of Self) causes bondage, so it is quite appropriate that realisation or knowledge (of Self) should lead to freedom. (S.B. III-2-4).

२१०. विद्यायां हि सत्यां उदिते सवितरि शार्वरमिव तमः प्रणाशमुपगच्छत्यविद्या ।

210. On realisation (of Self), ignorance (Avidya) disappears, as at sunrise the darkness of night vanishes. (G. II-69).

२११. ज्ञानकर्मणोः कर्तृत्वाकर्तृत्वबुद्ध्याश्रययोः युगपत् एकपुरुषाश्रयत्वासंभवः ।

211. It is impossible for Jnana and Karma to co-exist simultaneously in one and the same person, the one being based on the idea of non-agency (and unity) and the other on the idea of agency (and diversity or multiplicity). (G. II-11-Intro.).

२१२. न ह्येकस्य मुमुक्षुत्वं फलार्थित्वं च युगपत्संभवति ।

212. One cannot indeed pursue fruits and at the same time seek for freedom, Moksha. (G. IV-II).

Note :—The running after a result causes man to act, to do Karma. "Seeking for freedom" takes the form of outward passivity or abandonment of Karma. Karma and non-Karma cannot thus exist in the same state of mind.

२१३. एकस्य पुरुषस्य ज्ञानकर्मणोः विरोधात् युगपदनुष्ठानं न संभवति ।

213. The same person cannot take to the practice of Jnana and Karma (meditation on Self and rituals) as the two are mutually opposite. (G. III Intr.).

३१४. ज्ञानकर्मनिष्ठयोः परस्परविरोधात् एकपुरुषेण युगपदनुष्ठातुं अशक्यम् ।

214. The steadfast practice of Jnana and Karma cannot go simultaneously in the same person as they (the mind in their practice) run in opposite directions (one inwards and the other outwards). (G. 3-4 Intr.).

२१५. धर्मोपि मुमुक्षोः किल्बिषमेव, बंधापादकत्वात् ।

215. Even Dharma (righteous act) is injurious or harmful to a seeker of liberation as it causes bondage. (G. 4-21).

Note :—See No. 154 and note on it.

२१६. कर्मयोगिनो अक्षरोपासनानुपपत्तिं दर्शयति भगवान् ।

216. The Lord shows that Akshara Upasana (the meditation in which there is no distinction between the Lord and Self) is not appropriate for a Karma Yogi. (G. 12-13 Intr.).

Note :—Gita XII—16 speaks of सर्वारंभपरित्यागः (the abandonment of all acts). In Karma Yoga there is performance of acts but with non-attachment. One has to rise above Karma Yoga also, i.e. have no Karma at all.

२१७. न ज्ञाननिष्ठा कर्मसहितोपपद्यते ।

217. The steadfast practice of Jnana does not fit in with Karma. (G. XIII-66)

Note :—In a Jnani the sense of actorship is gone. So how can he act?

२१८. ज्ञाननिष्ठा कर्मणा सहभावित्वेन विरुध्यते पर्वतसर्षपयोरिवान्तरवान् विरोधः ।

218. The steadfast practice of Jnana cannot co-exist with Karma, being contrariwise. The difference between them is as between a mountain and a mustard. (G. 18-55).

Note :—This statement has to be grasped and well remembered. The psychological attitude in Karma and Jnana are exactly opposite—one goes outwards to senses, the other goes inwards to Atman within. One is intent on trivial results, the other on attaining God or Self, conferring eternal bliss. So is not this difference as vast as the one between a mustard and a mountain?

२१९. बाह्यप्रत्यगात्मप्रवृत्तेः विरोधात् ।

219. The two tendencies, one going outwards and the other devoting itself to the inner Self, are contrariwise. (B. 1-6-1).

Note :—Explains No. 168.

What to do?

२२०. महति शोकसागरे निमग्नस्य अर्जुनस्य अन्यत्र आत्मज्ञानात् उद्धारणं अपश्यत भगवान् वासुदेवः ।

220. The Lord Vasudeva found no other means than Self-knowledge for the deliverance of Arjuna plunged in the mighty ocean of grief. (G. II-11-Intr.).

Note :—Only on hearing of the great benefit to accrue from Atma Jnana does one's inclination turn towards Atman. This is the first step. So the Gita in Chapter II begins with a statement regarding the true nature of Atman.

२२१. कर्मबीजोऽविद्याक्षेत्रो ह्यसौ संसारवृक्षः समूलमुद्धर्तव्यः तदुद्धारणेन हि पुरुषार्थसमाप्तिः ।

221. This tree of the relative existence has one's own action for its seed and ignorance as the field for its growth. It has to be pulled out with its roots. For only on the uprooting of it comes about the achievement of the highest aim of man. (B. 1-4).

Note :—This states what is to be rejected, as No. 220 stated what is to be accepted.

२२२. निगडे हि निर्ज्ञाते, निगडितस्य मोक्षाय यत्नः कर्तव्यो भवति ।

222. Only when the fetters are known, can the fettered man try to get rid of them. (Br. II 1-Intr.).

२२३. सर्वेषां हि ब्रह्मविद्या पुरुषार्थाय उपदिश्यते ।

223. Indeed realisation of Brahman has been taught as the means to the highest end of life for all (as within the reach of all). (Br. III 2-3).

२२४.ससाधनं कर्म संन्यस्य शरीरयात्रामात्रचेष्टो यतिः, ज्ञाननिष्ठो मुच्यते ।

224. That Yati (man of self-control) who renounces all actions with their accessories, except what is necessary for the

bare bodily existence, steady in his devotion to knowledge, gets liberated. (G. 4-21. Intr.).

Sthita Prajna : the Beacon Light

२२५. बाह्यलाभनिरपेक्षः परमार्थदर्शनामृतरसलाभेन अन्यस्मादलं प्रत्ययवान् स्थितप्रज्ञः ।

225. One without longing for external possessions, indifferent to everything else because of his acquisition of the immortal nectar (his realisation of Supreme Truth), such a one is the steadfast in Knowledge. (G. II. 55).

२२६. सर्वत्र एव हि अध्यात्मशास्त्रे यान्येव कृतार्थलक्षणानि, तान्येव साधनान्युपदिश्यन्ते यत्नसाध्यत्वात् ।

226. Everywhere in spiritual science the characteristic attributes of the successful Yogi are being mentioned for being taken up for practice by the Sadhaka, for these can be acquired by practice. (G. II-55).

Note :—A very great aid to Jnana Nishtha is described here. The great qualities of a Jnani did not descend on him one fine morning. The Jnani, earlier as a Sadhaka, did strive with infinite perseverance and effort, to cultivate them. He was conscious at each step of his fall or rise. He consciously strove for them till they gradually grew in him and got established. Then he became the Jnani.

The great qualities of a Sthitaprajna are mentioned in the Sastras as a help to others, to induce them to strive for their attainment. The Sastra is meant for the Sadhaka and not for the Siddha. Ethical excellences get established in a man, only by taking up and patiently and perseveringly cultivating them. The mere statement of them is thus an instruction to practise them. Sthitaprajnas are models set before us, for us to emulate them.

यानि यत्नसाध्यानि साधनानि, लक्षणानि च भवन्ति तानि ।

227. The means, which by effort lead to the end, later become the attributes (of the Yogi). (G. II-55).

२२८. यावत् यत्नसाध्यं तावत् संन्यासिनः अनुष्ठेयं गुणातीतत्वसाधनं मुमुक्षो स्थिरीभूतं तु स्वसंवेद्यं सत् गुणातीतस्य यतेः लक्षणं भवति ।

228. These which can be achieved by effort are to be practised by the Sanyasin. The seeker of Moksha should adopt these as the means to transcend the Gunas. When these become firmly established in him, they become the attributes of the Gunatita. (G. 14-26. Intr.).

Ethics essential

२२९. आत्मज्ञानं ससंन्यासं अमृतत्वसाधनम् ।

229. Self-knowledge together with renunciation is the means to immortality. (Br. III 5-1. Intr.).

Note :—Renunciation here is of desires and their means, the Karmas, also.

२३० इन्द्रियाणां हि विषयसेवातृष्णातो निवृत्तिः या तत् सुखं न विषयाविषया तृष्णा, दुःखमेव हि सा । न तृष्णायां सत्यां सुखस्य गंधमात्रमपि उपपद्यते ।

230. Verily, happiness consists in the freedom of senses from thirst for sensual enjoyment, not in the thirst for objects. This last is misery indeed. While there is thirst (for enjoyment) there can be no trace of happiness; we cannot so much as smell it. (G. II-66).

Note :—This has to be well borne in mind to incline one to renunciation.

२३१. परं निःश्रेयसं सर्वकर्मसंन्यासपूर्वकात् आत्मज्ञाननिष्ठारूपात धर्मात् भवति ।

231. Supreme Bliss accrues from that Dharma which consists in steady devotion to the realisation of the self, preceded by renunciation of all works. (G. General-Intro.).

Note :—Atma-jnana-nishtha is the one supreme Sadhana in man's life for his eternal good. All others are at best preliminary disciplines to be superseded as this attains growth.

२३२. शास्त्राचार्योपदेशशमदमादिसंस्कृतं मनः आत्मदर्शने कारणम् ।

232. The mind refined by the control of the body, the senses and the lower mind, and equipped with the teachings of the Scripture and the teacher, constitutes means to realise Self (in its true nature). (G. II-21).

Note :—Sama and Dama, (the internal and external control of the mind), are the greatest purifiers of the mind, not Nitya Karma, charity, etc. A purified mind is the instrument for realisation, not the sense-bound mind.

२३३. गीताशास्त्रे आत्मज्ञानवतः संन्यासे एव अधिकारः न कर्मणि ।

233. The Gita Sastra teaches that the man who has acquired a right conception of the Self (from the Sastra or the Guru) should resort to renunciation only, not to works.

२३४. नासति सम्यग्दर्शने रसस्योच्छेदः तस्मात् सम्यग्दर्शनात्मिकायाः प्रज्ञायाः स्थैर्यं कर्तव्यम् ।

234. In the absence of right realisation (of Self) there can be no annihilation of the desire for sense objects. So a steadfast attitude of mind should be cultivated which has for its core the zeal for right realisation. (G. II-59).

Note :—Only right realisation destroys Samskaras.

२३५. आदौ इन्द्रियाणि स्ववशे स्थापयितव्यानि ।

235. Even from the beginning the senses should be kept under control. (G. II-60 Intr.).

२३६. अक्षरोपासकानां सम्यग्दर्शननिष्ठानां "अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां" इत्यादिधर्मपूगः साक्षादमृतत्वकारणम् ।

236. For the worshippers of the Akshara, for those whose one supreme endeavour is for the right realisation, the direct

means of immortality taught in the bunch of Dharmas like "absence of hatred of all beings etc.," are prescribed. (These are given in verses Nos. 13 to 20 of chapter XII-Gita. See Gita quotations under Appendix).

२३७. विदुषः अविक्रियात्मदर्शिनः फलार्थित्वाभावात् प्रवृत्त्यनुपपत्तौ कार्यकरणसंघात-व्यापारोपरमे निवृत्तिरुपचर्यते ।

237. The wise man, seeing the immutable Self, cherishes no longing for results and does not therefore engage in action; when, as a consequence, the activity of the aggregate of the body and the senses ceases, he is described as abstaining from action. (G. XIII-2).

Personal effort (Purushakara) for self-control necessary; not rituals

२३८. ज्ञाते हि अनर्थमूले तदुच्छेदाय यत्नं कुर्यात् ।

238. When the exact source of the evil is known, one must exert oneself to uproot it. (G. III-36 Intr.).

२३९. पुरुषकारस्य विषयानुपपत्तेः शास्त्रानर्थक्यम् ।

239. If there is no scope for personal exertion (Purushakara) then the Sastra (Scriptures) would become quite purposeless. (G. III-34 Intr.).

Note :—Gita III—33 states that even a man of clear theoretical knowledge of Atman is compelled by his Samskaras to go as they pull him ; he is fettered hand and foot by Samskaras. Thus the question becomes relevant : what then is the scope for Sastras? If he is so bound, how can the light of Sastras prevail on him? The reply is given in No. 240.

२४० अयं पुरुषकारस्य शास्त्रस्य च विषयः शास्त्रार्थे प्रवृत्तः पूर्वमेव रागद्वेषयोर्वशं नागच्छेत् । या हि पुरुषस्य प्रकृतिः सा रागद्वेषपुरस्सरैव स्वकार्ये पुरुषं प्रवर्तयति, तदा स्वधर्मपरित्यागः परधर्मानुष्ठानं च भवति । यदा पुनः रागद्वेषौ तत्प्रतिपक्षेण नियामयति, तदा शास्त्रदृष्टिरेव पुरुषो भवति न प्रकृतिवशः ।

240. Here lies the scope for personal exertion and for the Sastras (sacred teachings). One following Sastra should from the very beginning rise above the sway of likes and dislikes. For, what we speak of as the nature (Prakriti) of a person draws him to its course through love or aversion. Then he neglects his own duties and sets about doing those of others. When, on the other hand, a person restrains these feelings by means of their opposites, only then he becomes mindful of Sastras and no longer subject to his nature (Samskaras). (G. III-34).

Note :—Samskaras generate in the mind likes and dislikes. The liking for the sense-pleasures must be counteracted by love of God ; one draws outward, the other inward. Love of God should consciously be cultivated to quell desires. Or a man should cultivate equanimity in face of these likes and dislikes, thus counteracting the waves in the mind. It is these restraints which counteract the likes and dislikes of the mind, that constitute true acts, according to Sastras. Restraint is the way pointed out by the Sastras.

२४१. यतन्तः—इन्द्रियोपसंहारशमदमदयाऽहिंसादिलक्षणैः प्रयतन्तः ।

241. "Striving" means making effort by subjugating the senses, by cultivating internal and external control over oneself, kindness, non-violence and the like. (G. 9-14).

२४२. तस्मादिदं धर्म्यामृतं मुमुक्षुणा यत्नेन अनुष्ठेयम् ।

242. Therefore these actions with nectarine results should be zealously practised by every seeker of Liberation. (G. 12-20).

Note :—The qualities of the Bhakta given in Slokas Nos. 13-19 of Chapter XII of Gita, (See under Appendix) are the things to be cultivated and practised. This Dharma alone confers immortality, not other Dharmas mentioned in Karma Sastras.

२४३. न हि इच्छाद्वेषदोषवशीकृतचित्तस्य यथाभूतार्थविषयज्ञानं उत्पद्यते बहिः अपि किमु वक्तव्यं ताभ्यामाविष्टबुद्धेः संमूढस्य प्रत्यगात्मनि बहु प्रतिबद्धे ज्ञानं न उत्पद्यते इति ।

243. To one whose mind is subject to evils of desire and aversion there cannot indeed arise a knowledge of things as they are, even of the external world; it may be said of a man whose intellect is overpowered by passion that there cannot arise a knowledge of the innermost Self, inasmuch as there are many obstacles in his way. (G. 7-27).

Note :—In a tank full of waves the bottom cannot be seen. So also in a mind tossed by passions, the inner truth cannot be seen.

२४४ (ए) भूतं ब्रह्म जिज्ञासितव्यं, नित्यत्वात् न पुरुषव्यापारतन्त्रम्

(बी) यथाभूतब्रह्मविषयं ज्ञानं, न चोदनातन्त्रं, यथा अक्षार्थसंनिकर्षेण अर्थावबोधो (तद्वत्)

(सी) नतु वस्तु एवं नेवं, अस्ति नास्ति, इति वा विकल्प्यते ।

(डी) नतु वस्तुयाथात्म्यज्ञानं पुरुषबुद्ध्यपेक्षं, किं तर्हि, वस्तुतन्त्रमेव तत । ब्रह्मज्ञानमपि वस्तुतन्त्रमेव. भूतवस्तुविषयत्वात् ।

244. A. Brahman exists; the desire should be to know it. It is eternal. It does not depend on any activity of man. (S.B. 1-1-1).

B. A knowledge of the reality of Brahman does not depend on any activity of man. When an object is near the eye, the eye sees it, so also is the knowledge of Brahman. (S.B. 1-1-1).

C. There are no alternatives in Truth, as "it is so," "it is not so" or "it is," "it is not." (S. B. 1-1-2).

D. The true knowledge of any object is not dependent on the mental activity of man. It depends on the nature of the object. Similarly the knowledge of Brahman also is de-

pendent on the nature of the thing itself, as it too relates to an existing thing. (S. B. 1-1-2).

Note :—The idea of realising one's Atman is extremely difficult. It is called Atma Jnana, knowledge of Atma. Even though the necessity for personal effort is emphasised in Nos. 188 to 193, that there is no trace of personal effort in Atma Jnana is the theme here. A reference is made to an experience to illustrate the subject matter. An object is within the ken of the eye. The eye sees it. The seeing is not an act or the result of an act. It is a natural functioning of the eye ; by this functioning of the eye, the knowledge of the right form of the object arises in man. True knowledge results from the natural functionings of the sense-organs of man. And this knowledge corresponds to the true form of the object. So this knowledge which corresponds to or is dependent on the object is called वस्तुतन्त्र (depending on the object). But when the eyes have, say, jaundice, the white colour of the object is seen as yellow, which does not correspond to the truth. The straying from the truth has arisen from the defect of the eye or the defect of the person. Colour of the object, seen while man has jaundice, is dependent on the man. Yellow colour has come from the man i.e., is dependent on the man. So it is called पुरुषतन्त्र or बुद्धितन्त्र (dependent on man, or dependent on his mind). Seeing by the eye causes knowledge of the world. Knowledge of Brahman or the Self is similarly caused by an insight, not of the eye or any other senses but of superconsciousness, when the mind has been extremely purified of its passions. Passions of the mind are like jaundice of the eyes. What is seen with the agitations of passions becomes पुरुषतन्त्र. What is seen when the mind is not clouded by passions is वस्तुतन्त्र (thing as it is and without distortions caused by the mind tossed with passions). The illustration makes clear the necessity to quell passions. This quelling of the passions of the mind is

the scope of personal effort. But superconscious mind, free from the last trace of passions, sees the Atman. This is knowledge and it is वस्तुतन्त्र (Vastu Tantra). This Atma Jnana is बुद्धिग्राह्यं, अतीन्द्रियं of the Gita.

The statement of Sankara that Sastras are ज्ञापक shows his highly scientific view of things and the other statement of his that ज्ञान is वस्तुतन्त्र confirms this. Thus it is clear that his view is turned to the truth of things. He is not a theologian who seeks to find justification for the texts of the Vedas. This latter aspect makes him rank among the philosophers not only of his times but of all times. These two propositions that शास्त्रं हि ज्ञापकम् and वस्तुतन्त्रं हि ज्ञानम् colour his thought very deeply. If these two propositions are thoroughly understood, it is easy to understand Sankara.

Note on No. 174 also deals with this matter, as also No. 244 of this section.

Atman—a Self-evident Entity

Introduction :

In this section a subtle idea is dealt with regarding the Self. The idea is that it is not the Vedas or Sastras that reveal the Self, but that, in fact, Atman is self-evident. The Self of man is "knower" of all, even of knowledge and ignorance. It is a common experience to feel 'I do not know this,' "I know this." So knowledge and ignorance themselves are objects of knowledge to this "knower." Only with this "knower" as the basis can any search for knowledge begin. Self is different from the mind. It understands the states of the mind, that it is sad, it is glad, etc. But Atman is the light and the witness, far different from the consciousness of the mind.

So it is not with the aid of the Sastras that man comes to know his Self. It is never an unknown factor first, which was

made known later by Sastra. But there is a mist round the Atman. Sastras aid to clear this mist. One cannot obtain his Self for the Self is the obtainer. Nor can one give up his Self. It is the ever-existent and self-evident first principle. This is the gist of the section.

२४५. यश्चान्यो विज्ञानस्य ग्रहीता, स आत्मा, ज्योतिरन्तरं विज्ञानात् ।

245. And that other entity which grasps the consciousness is the Self, a light different from the consciousness. (Br. 4 4-7).

२४६. नह्यात्मा नाम कस्यचित् कदाचित् अप्रसिद्धः प्राप्यो हेय उपादेयो वा ।

246. The Self is not a thing unknown to anybody at any time, not a thing to be reached (attained) or got rid of, or acquired. (G. 18-50).

२४७. यथा स्वदेहस्य परिच्छेदाय न प्रमाणान्तरापेक्षा ततः आत्मनः आन्तरतमत्वात् तदवगतिं प्रति न प्रमाणान्तरापेक्षा इत्यात्मज्ञाननिष्ठा विवेकिनां सुप्रसिद्धा ।

247. Just as there is no need for any external evidence to know one's own body, so also there is no need for any external evidence to know one's Self which is nearer than the body. So, for the wise, practice of Jnana is also equally well known automatically. (G. 18-50).

Note :—Meditation on Sri Rama or Sri Krishna or one's own **Guru** is quite possible. An image of these with their qualities comes to our mind. Meditation, Nishtha here, is continuous retention of the image in our mind. How can Atma Jnana Nishtha be practised as one cannot form an image of the Atman? The answer is that it is quite possible. No extraneous agent like a light or a man, etc., is necessary to make one know that he has a body. Atman is much nearer and inner to man than his body. In fact it is the prime knower in us. It is the witness of all, mind, Prana and body.

It is self-evident; no extraneous aid like sunlight or Sastra is required to know it. But this primary, self-evident knower is mixed up with other things. These other things have to be rejected by the mind, that Atman is not the body, that Atman is not mind. This experience has to be confirmed and stabilised. Atman is the simple witness of all. This idea can be practised by the mind continuously. So Atma Jnana Nishtha is quite possible.

२४८. आत्मा तु प्रमाणादिव्यवहारस्य आश्रयत्वात् प्रागेव प्रमाणव्यवहारात् सिद्धयति ।

248. The process of valid knowledge is dependent on Atman (the knower). So Atman has to be posited before the process of knowledge commences. (S. B. 2 3-7).

२४९. ज्ञानवशेनैव ज्ञेयावगतिः इति ज्ञानं अत्यन्तप्रसिद्धं सुखादिवत् इत्यभ्युपगन्तव्यम् ।

249. An object of knowledge is apprehended through cognition; so cognition is automatically known as pleasure and the like. (G. 18-50).

२५०. अतो अत्यन्तप्रसिद्धं ज्ञानं ज्ञाता अपि अत एव प्रसिद्ध इति ।

250. Wherefore cognition is self-revealed, and therefore also is the cogniser self-revealed. (G. 18-50).

२५१. विवेकाविवेकौ रूपादिवत् प्रत्यक्षौ उपलभ्येते अन्तःकरणस्थौ ।

251. Like forms, etc., knowledge and ignorance are objects of immediate perception but as matters within the mind (Tai. 2-8).

Why Sastra then ?

२५२. आत्मविशेषं प्रति विप्रतिपत्तेः ।

252. There are differences of opinion about the qualities of Atman. (S.B. 1. 1-1).

Note :—Regarding the nature of Atman there are different schools of thought and conflicting opinions.

२५३. इदं तु ज्ञेयं अतीन्द्रियत्वेन शब्दैकप्रमाणगम्यं, नान्यथा, अदृष्टत्वात् ।

253. But this entity to be known, being beyond the reach of the senses, can be known solely through the instrument of knowledge called the Sabda, viz. the Vedas. Not otherwise, being beyond the senses. (G. 13-12).

Note :—Our knowledge generally is a thing outside ourselves. These are known by our five sense organs which can function only on outside things. Atman, the inner core of man, is beyond man's five senses projecting outside. But there have been Rishis who have dived deep within themselves and have gained correct experience of the soul. The record of these supersensuous experiences are the Vedas and the Upanishads. These being a record of experiences, and not speculations of the mind, must be correct. So the conflict of opinions is given a quietus by the hard experience of the Rishis, recorded in Sastras. Thus the function of the Sastras, or the Vedas is to reduce this conflict of opinions regarding the soul, on the basis of experience. Aparoksha Anubhuti (experience beyond the eyes or the senses) settles all conflicts. This record of supersensuous experience of Rishis is called "Sabda." No inference can have authority against perception. Not all the sentences in the Vedas are Pramana Vakyas (valid or authoritative sentences). This has been dealt with in No. 12.

२५४. शास्त्रं तु अन्त्यं प्रमाणं अतद्धर्माध्यारोपणमात्रनिवर्तकत्वेन प्रामाण्यमात्मना प्रतिपद्यते, न तु अज्ञानार्थज्ञापकत्वेन ।

254. Indeed the Scripture (Sastra), which is the final (or later) authority, obtains its authoritativeness regarding the Self by simply serving to eliminate the Adhyaropa or superimposition (on the Self) of the attributes alien to the Self; but not by revealing what has been altogether unknown. (G. 2-18).

Note :—As stated in note No. 253, Sastras or Sabda is the final authority which gives final quietus to all wrong speculations on Atman. On the express statement of the Vedas on a subject (here Atman), all other opinions have to be discarded. So this is the final authority. It is not Atman that was unknown before the Vedas made it known to us. From the very first Atman was known. But there were some cobwebs over that Atman. Sastras remove these cobwebs alone. Atman then shines, and then is correctly known.

२५५. नैसर्गिको मिथ्याप्रत्ययरूपः कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वप्रवर्तको अध्यासः सर्वलोकप्रत्यक्षः । अस्य अनर्थहेतोः प्रहाणाय आत्मैकत्वविद्याप्रतिपत्तये सर्वे वेदान्ता आरभ्यन्ते ।

255. This superimposition (on the pure soul), taking the form of the illusory idea that one has to do things and enjoy results from them, is a part of our very nature. It is within the experience of all. For removing this cause of evil and realising the One (and only) Soul, are all the Vedantas (Upanishads) begun. (S.B. Intr.)

Note :—One of the cobwebs over the Atman, that has to be removed by Sastra, is the idea of actorship. Man is born with the idea that he has no bliss and has to work for it and obtain it and enjoy it. So he starts with work and actorship. Upanishads tell him that Atman is the fountain of bliss and that he has to know his real state. "Actorship" and "enjoyership" are false and are to be discarded. Sastra imparts to him the idea that actorship has to be given up.

Nature of Atman

२५६. आत्मा च ब्रह्म ।

256. Atman the Self is Brahman. (S.B. 1 1-1).

२५७. मोक्षस्य नित्यत्वात् अनारभ्यत्वम् ।

257. Moksha being eternal cannot be the product of any action (ritual). (G. 6 Intr.)

Note :—Freedom is natural to the soul. Soul does not acquire it by Brahma Vidya. This is expressed in different aspects in 258, 259 and 260.

२५८. अद्वयत्वात् अविषयत्वात् आत्मत्वाच्च (इदं ज्ञेयं) न केनचित् शब्देन उच्यत इति युक्तम् ।

258. It is one without a second; it is no object (of any of our senses); it is the very Self. So it is right to say that this (entity to be known) cannot be expressed or described by words. (G. 13-2).

२५९. न हि नित्यं वस्तु कर्मणा ज्ञानेन वा क्रियते ।

259. Indeed the eternal reality is produced neither by realisation nor by rituals. (G. 18-66).

२६०. न हि पारमार्थिकं वस्तु कर्तुं निवर्तयितुं वाऽर्हति ब्रह्मविद्या ।

260. Indeed the discipline of meditation for the realisation of Brahman does not serve to create or destroy the real entity. (Br. I. 4-10).

२६१ रूपाद्यभावात् हि नायमर्थः प्रत्यक्षगोचरः लिंगाद्यभावाच्च, न अनुमानादीनाम् ।

261. Having no form, etc., this thing (the Self) is not an object of direct perception by any sense and, not possessing any indicative mark, it does not become a subject of inference. (S.B. II 1-6).

Note :—This gives reasons why Atman is known only by Sabda. Self or Brahman has no form, no smell, no sound, no body, etc. So senses cannot grasp it. So it is beyond senses. Nor has it any indicating mark as fire its smoke. With the help of smoke we reason that there is fire. But as there is no

such indicating mark to Self, it is beyond reason also. Hence the necessity for a third Pramana like Sabda.

२६२ न हि अन्यत्वं जीवस्य ईश्वरादुपपद्यते ।

262. It is not proper to state that the Jiva is different from Isvara (the Lord). (S.B. III 2-6).

२६३. अभावः शरीरेन्द्रियाणां मोक्षे ।

263. In Moksha (state of liberation) there is no body or organs. (S.B. IV 4-10).

Note :—This is the difference in the idea of Moksha, between Mimamsakas and Dvaitins on the one hand, and Advaitins on the other. Mimamsakas do not conceive of bodilessness to the Soul in Heaven or the Dvaitin in Vaikunta.

Nature of Jnana

Introduction :

Ruminating over the passages in this section will lead to fuller and more correct and clearer intellectual grasp of Self and will be helpful to meditation on Self.

२६४. परमार्थतत्वविषयं ज्ञानं एकमेवेदं सर्वं ब्रह्म अकर्तृ च इति ।

264. The form taken by the realisation of the Grand Truth is "All this is One, the Brahman, the Absolute, and Non-doer." (G. II-11. Intr.).

२६५. बाह्यलाभनिरपेक्षः परमार्थदर्शनामृतरसलाभेन अन्यस्मादलं प्रत्ययवान स्थितप्रज्ञः ।

265. One who is without any concern to gain anything from outside and who because of his acquisition of the immortal nectar, the realisation of the Supreme Truth, is averse to everything else—such a one is steadfast in Jnana. (G. II-55).

२६६. न च मिथ्याज्ञानं परमार्थवस्तु दूषयितुं समर्थम् । अविद्यया क्षेत्रज्ञस्य न किंचित्कर्तुं शक्नोति ।

266. Illusory idea or knowledge has no power to affect the real thing. Avidya has no power to do anything to Kshetrajna (G. 13 Intr.).

Note :—"Ignorance" contaminates our mind, but it has no power to soil the Atman. Atman remains ever pure in spite of impurity of mind.

२६७. अविद्यायाः निवर्तकं सम्यग्दर्शनम् ।

267. True realisation or knowledge removes ignorance (Avidya). (G. 13-27 Intr.).

Note:—Light alone can dispel darkness.

२६८. एषणाव्युत्थानावसानमेव हि तत्पाण्डित्यम् ।

268. That scholarship or knowledge is the final culmination of the renunciation of desires. (Br. 3. 5-1).

Note :—Real knowledge or wisdom is not deep or vast scholarship. It is rising up completely far above the passions that mar the mind of man.

२६९. अक्रियामात्रत्वात् व्युत्थानस्य ।

269. Renunciation is the mere giving up of actions. (Ait. Intr P. 14).

२७०. क्रियायामिव वस्तुनि विकल्पस्यासंभवात् ।

270. There can be no alternatives in (the right conception of) Reality as in Karma (action or ritual). (S:B.I. 4-15).

Steps to Atma Jnana

२७१ कर्मयोगः, सत्वशुद्धिः, ज्ञानप्राप्तिः, सर्वकर्मसंन्यासः, ज्ञाननिष्ठा क्रमेण शान्तिः ।

271. The stages of Atma Jnana in order are Karma Yoga, purity of mind, then attainment of knowledge, then renunciation of actions and lastly Jnana Nishtha (Meditation) ending in the Peace of Self-realisation. (G. 5-12).

२७२. कर्मनिष्ठायाः ज्ञाननिष्ठाप्राप्तिहेतुत्वेन पुरुषार्थहेतुत्वं न स्वातन्त्र्येण ।

272. Action with detachment (Karma Nishtha) is an intermediate means to the end, namely devotion to knowledge and is not an independent means (to the final end, realisation). (G. 3-4 Intr.)

Note :—Karma generally causes bondage and so is antagonistic to knowledge and attainment of freedom. But Karma done with detachment to fruits as Karma Yoga is a means to attainment of purity of mind and becomes helpful to Jnana Nishtha. Karma as Yoga thus fulfils itself. So Karma should be done as Yoga and not merely as Karma. Karma Yoga thus leads to the highest goal, through further stages.

२७३ ज्ञाननिष्ठा तु कर्मनिष्ठोपायलब्धात्मिका सती स्वातन्त्र्येण पुरुषार्थहेतुः अन्यानपेक्षा ।

273. But Jnana Nishtha which is attained with the help of unattached action (Karma Nishtha) leads to the goal directly without extraneous aid. (G. 3-4 Intr.).

Note :—Jnana Nishtha leads directly to the highest goal.

२७४. कर्मारंभस्य एव नैष्कर्म्योपायत्वात ।

274. Only performance of action becomes the means for attaining freedom from activity. (G. 3-4).

Note :—For Karma Yoga, Karma is necessary. The attitude of detachment can be exercised only then. Only when a needy man comes, can the feeling of charity be exereised. Only when desires arise, can they be eradicated. Thus Karma Yoga leads to total cessation of Karma, when first the desire for fruit is stopped; then the desire itself dies at last. Then there is no call to Karma.

२७५. न ह्युपायमन्तरेण उपेयप्राप्तिरस्ति । कर्मयोगोपायत्वं न नैष्कर्म्यलक्षणस्य ज्ञानयोगस्य ।

275. Certainly there is no attainment of the end except

by proper means. Jnana Yoga, characterised by cessation of activity, has for its means Karma Yoga.

Note :—Note on No. 274 will help in understanding this.

२७६. ध्यानयोगो सम्यग्दर्शनस्य अन्तरङ्गम् ।

276. Dhyana Yoga is the inner core of the right realisation (of the Self). (G. 5-27 Intr.)

Note :—This is a very important statement. This has always to be remembered to understand Jnana Yoga. Jnana Yogi is not the clever expounder of Upanishads and Gita but an adept in the meditation of the Self. Right meditation is the culminating point in all Yogas.

२७७. अज्ञानामेव हि कर्मयोगो न ज्ञानिनाम् ।

277. Karma Yoga is meant only for the ignorant (of Self); not for the wise. (G. 3-5).

Note :—The other feature of Jnana Yoga is the cessation of rituals and external activities. These are for the "ignorant."

२७८. न निवृत्तमिथ्याज्ञानिनां आत्मज्ञाननिष्ठाव्यतिरेकेण अन्यत् कार्यमस्ति ।

278. For those free from illusory knowledge there is nothing else to be practised than Jnana Nishtha. (G. 3-10 Intr.)

Note :—The illusory knowledge is that one is the body, Prana and mind. The idea of pure Atman, the "witness" has not dawned in his mind.

२७९. अग्निहोत्रादिकर्म फलनिरपेक्षमनुष्ठीयमानं, ध्यानयोगारोहणसाधनत्वं सत्वशुद्धि-द्वारेण प्रतिपद्यते ।

279. Rituals such as Agnihotra, done without desire for fruits, by purifying the mind, become a means to rise up to Dhyana Yoga. (G. VI Intr.)

Note :—Not merely social duties but rituals as well can be used as field for the practice of Karma Yoga.

२८०. कर्मजा सिद्धिः ज्ञाननिष्ठा योग्यतालक्षणा ।

280. The perfection or purity born of doing action qualifies a man to become fit for Jnana Nishtha. (G. 18-46 to 49).

Note :—Perfect success in Karma Yoga is the pathway to Jnana Nishtha. In No. 274 the same topic is expressed differently. Nos. 280, 281 and 282 give the successive stages in the attainment of purity of mind till the highest realisation, Samyak Darsana, is reached.

२८१. तस्याः फलभूता नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिः ज्ञाननिष्ठालक्षणा ।

281. The fruit thereof (of Karma Yoga) is absolute cessation of action and is characterised by Jnana Nishtha. (G. 18-49 Intr.).

२८२ नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिः परमां कर्मजसिद्धिविलक्षणां, सद्योमुक्त्यवस्थानुरूपां सम्यग्दर्शनेन प्राप्नोति ।

282. The attainment of freedom from action (or the state of actionless Self) is the supreme culmination as distinguished from the relative perfection resulting from Karma Yoga; it is a state of immediate Liberation (Sadyo Mukti). This is attained by right Realisation.

Jnana Paripaka

Introduction :

The clearing of the mists of mind, and the attainment of more and more purity by way of detachment from the body idea and so on, is a gradual process of growth and ripening "Paripaka," the congenial atmosphere for the growth of this moral excellence. Thus ethical perfection is one of the important factors for realisation of the Self.

२८३ ज्ञानस्य स्वात्मोत्पत्तिपरिपाकहेतुयुक्तस्य प्रतिपक्षविहीनस्य यत् आत्मानुभवनिश्चयावसानत्वं तस्य निष्ठाशब्दाभिलापः ।

283. The word Jnana Nishtha denotes that the final consumation firmly rests on one's own conviction born of direct experience (of the Self); but this is preceded by certain conditions favourable for its growth and complete ripening (Paripaka), viz., freedom from all adverse conditions. (G. 18-55).

Note :—283 and 295 are the same. The purpose here is to emphasise that final attainment is not a sudden onset, as it were. Jnana Nishtha sprouts up in the congenial atmosphere of the purity born of Karma Yoga. Then there is a period of Paripaka, development and ripening. This aspect is emphasised here. Other factors will be taken up later.

२८४. ज्ञानोत्पत्तिपरिपाकहेतुं सहकारिकारणं बुद्धिविशुद्धि अमानित्वादि च अपेक्ष्य जनितस्वात्मानुभवनिश्चयरूपेण यदवस्थानं सा परा ज्ञाननिष्ठा ।

284. Knowledge arising and ripening under favourable attendant causes, namely purity of mind, etc. (G. 18-51 to 55) and humility (G. 13-7 to 11) (See under Appendix) and then culminating in the firm conviction by one's own experience is Jnana Nishtha. (Attainment of the Supreme consummation of knowledge and meditation). (G. 18-55).

Note :—This state, the ripening, takes place along with the cultivation of ethical excellences, etc., twelve in number stated in Gita Chapter XVIII, slokas 51 to 55, as well as twenty in number in Gita Chapter XIII, slokas 7 to 11 (See under Appendix). They are not the material causes like clay for the pot, but only instrumental causes like potter or wheel whose presence is essential for the birth of the pot. Though clay is the cause of the pot, it is very essential that other factors like potter and wheel should also operate in the production of the pot. Thus ethical excellences are as the wheel and the potter, for the ripening of Jnana. The factors for assisting ripening are given here. Ethical excellences do not add to the natural purity of the Atman though they are essential

for the realisation of the Atman. Another important point is that this growth, ripening and perfection, can be experienced. This experience gives one certainty—bliss of mind and peace.

२८५. मोक्षसाधनभूतात्मज्ञानपरिपाकार्थत्वात् संन्यासस्य ।

285. The purpose of Sanyasa (renunciation) is to mature or ripen Self-Knowledge, the means of liberation. (Br. 4. 4-7).

Note :—The reference to Paripaka (ripening) occurs not only in Gita but in Brihadaranyaka also. The emphasis on this point is repeated. Assumption of Sanyasa, is as a help to this Paripaka.

२८६ परया भक्त्या भगवन्तं तत्त्वतो अभिजानाति, यदनन्तरमेव ईश्वरक्षेत्रज्ञ-भेदबुद्धिरशेषतो निवर्तते ।

286. By Supreme Jnana Nishtha is the Lord known as He is, and only afterwards all consciousness of difference between Isvara and Kshetrajna (Atman) disappears altogether. (G. 18-55).

Note :—For Bhakti Yogis also, first comes this Paripaka and then realisation of their identity with the divine. Then only identity of Atman and God takes place. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa first realised his Mother. His Mother and he were separate. Only when Totapuri came he realised Advaita, that he and the Mother are one and not different.

२८७. ज्ञानसाधनानां भावनापरिपाकनिमित्तं तत्त्वज्ञानम् ।

287. The realisation of Truth results when the practice (meditation) of the means (humility, etc.,) attains maturity. The means are but attendant causes. (G. 13-11).

Note :—Here again is a referenec to Paripaka in another context. Realisation of Truth ensues from it.

Jnana Nishtha

Introduction :

This section gives the summit of spiritual practice. The highest endeavours for perfecting Personality are stated in this section. Thus it is natural that it comes in the final part, after all aspects of the problem of religion have been viewed.

२८८. नियुक्तस्य च अस्मिन्नधिकृतोऽहम् कर्ता, मयेदं कर्तव्यं, इति अवश्यं ब्रह्मप्रत्ययात् विपरीतप्रत्ययः उत्पद्यते ।

288. "I am qualified (to act), I have been enjoined (to do) this, I am the doer, this action has to be done by me"—these ideas generate ideas which are quite inconsistent with the idea "I am Brahman." (S.B. 4. 1-2).

Note :—The attitude of mind that prompts one to do an Adrishta Karma (a ritual with unseen result) and the attitude of mind while engaged in Jnana Nishtha (Jnana Yoga) are entirely different. "I am a doer." i.e. I have something to get from outside, "I have the power and desire to do it", "this is the course prescribed by the Vedas for this purpose"—these and other components of 'doership' occur in the mind of a Karmi. The ideas, that desires are our greatest enemies and that Self requires nothing to be added to, or be taken off from, find no place yet in his mind. The course prescribed in the rituals is most conventional and there is no room for any question why this detail comes or why that. If a question is asked, the only reply is "Vedas have prescribed it." The action is in a sense mechanical. At the end, one does not know whether one has come by the result or not; this is a very important distinction.

In Jnana Nishtha, the "I" itself has to be dissolved. The waves of the mind have to be calmed, desires have to disappear, nothing external is to be gained. The Sadhaka knows every inch of his progress or regress, that "the mind is more calm,

or less calm." He knows at last, that the mind is placid. The "witness" shines in his blissfulness and glory. He has lost the sense of body. All this is स्वसंवेद्यम् न परप्रत्यक्षम् . . . "full and certain conviction has arisen in himself, known only to himself and not capable of being seen by others." Are not the two attitudes and experiences of the mind, occurring during Karma and Jnana, quite different?

२८९. दृश्यन्ते हि सकृच्छ्रुतात् वाक्यात् मन्दप्रतीतं वाक्यार्थं आवर्तयन्तः तदाभासव्युदासेन सम्यक् प्रतीयमानाः ।

289. We do see that the meaning of a sentence which was faintly understood when heard once, when repeatedly heard, becomes well-understood, bereft of its haziness. (S.B. 4. 1-2).

Note :—We read a sentence. Its meaning is not clear to us. We think over the meaning, perhaps ask others to explain it. Then at last we know it and are satisfied. Thus "ignorance" is दृष्ट and its removal by Jnana is also "seen." There is great satisfaction when ignorance is removed. This is also "seen." The Phala (fruit) of Karma is अदृष्ट "not to be seen here but only after death", while in Jnana Nishtha it is entirely different. Result of Karma, being an unseen, unexperienced thing, may be doubted, but the result of Jnana being of the category "seen" प्रत्यक्ष, cannot be doubted.

२९०. ससाधनं कर्म संन्यस्य शरीरयात्रामात्रचेष्टो यतिः ज्ञाननिष्ठो मुच्यते ।

290. The devotee, who renouncing all actions with their accessories, except what is necessary for bare bodily maintenance, is steadfast in his devotion to knowledge, and gets liberated. (G. 4-21 Intr.).

Note :—All rites, rituals, ceremonies, i.e. Karmas, are dropped by a Sanyasin, a Jnana Nishtha. But Sankara, to ward off a misunderstanding on the part of Sadhakas, says "there is

minimum activity left to maintain the body." This much activity may be kept up to help us to realise. All Sadhanas take place to keep up the body till realisation while one lives embodied.

२९१. न, निवृत्तमिथ्याज्ञानिनां, आत्मज्ञाननिष्ठाव्यतिरेकेण, अन्यत् कार्यमस्ति ।

291. Those who are free from illusory knowledge have nothing else to do than resort to steadfast devotion to Self-knowledge. (G. 4-17. Intr.).

Note :—The effort to keep the mind quiet and untossed is correct but not rituals.

२९२. ज्ञानसाधनगणः अमानित्वादिः, यत्परः संन्यासी ज्ञाननिष्ठः उच्यते ।

292. The various means to Realisation (of the Self) are virtues like humility, etc. (G. 13-7 to 11). Intent on these, a Sanyasi becomes Jnana Nishtha. (G. 18. 7. Intr.).

२९३. परा ज्ञाननिष्ठा कथं कार्या ।

293. How is this consummation of knowledge to be worked out? (G. 18-51. Intr.).

Note :—The attention is here drawn to the word कार्या (to be worked out). Sankara is charged as advocating quietism. Jnana Nishtha is not quietism for a Sadhaka makes enormous effort to control his mind. Calmness and placidity of mind come in the last phase. Here too there is activity, not external but internal, Nivritti Karma (effort at restraint).

२९४. ज्ञाननिष्ठा ज्ञानावृत्तिलक्षणा ।

294. Devotion to knowledge means a repetition of knowledge (meditation).

Note :—Ritualistic Karma is generally done once, unless otherwise directed. Jnana Nishtha being meditation, the ideas have to flow continuously; meditation has to be done repeatedly till the goal is reached. Repetition is the peculiar feature of meditation, not of Vedic rituals.

२९५. ज्ञानस्य स्वात्मोत्पत्तिपरिपाकहेतुयुक्तस्य स्वात्मानुभवनिश्चयरूपेण अवस्थानं ज्ञाननिष्ठा ।

295. Jnana Nishtha consists of steadfast meditation, aided by all the favourable conditions of its rise and ripening, culminating in a firm conviction by one's own experience.

Note :—See note on No. 233. Here the emphasis is on repetition. When is this repetition of meditation to stop? When the great conviction is born by experience, by realisation, the Sadhaka knows and feels satisfied "that he has won the goal."

२९६. प्रत्यगात्म-अविक्रियस्वरूपनिष्ठत्वाच्च मोक्षस्य ।

296. Moksha accrues from the intense concentration of the true nature of the calm non-active Inner Self.

२९७. मुक्तावस्था हि सर्ववेदान्तेषु एकरूपैवावधार्यते । ब्रह्मैव हि मुक्तावस्था ।

297. The state of the Liberated is of one form only in all Vedantas. In the liberated state one is Brahman.

२९८. न देशकालनिमित्तापेक्षो मोक्षः कर्मफलवत् भवितुमर्हति ।

298. Moksha (liberation) which is not dependent on place, time or causation, cannot be like the fruit of action. (S.B. 4. 1-13).

Note :—A Vaidika Karma has a prescribed time, place and cause. Jnana Nishtha is not fettered by any of these factors. So necessarily the result too has to be of a different nature.

२९९. दर्शनपर्यवसानानि हि श्रवणादीनि आवर्त्यमानानि दृष्टार्थानि भवन्ति । यथावघातादीनि हि तण्डुलादिनिष्पत्तिपर्यवसानानि तद्वत् ।

299. Hearing, etc., (thinking and meditating of Brahman) which are meant to culminate in seeing (realising) the Self, when repeated, result in direct experience, just as the husking of paddy, etc., are seen to end palpably on the coming out of the grain. (S.B. 4. 1-1).

Note :—When should meditation for the attainment of Jnana cease? When does the process of husking paddy stop? When the rice emerges. If at the first stroke the rice comes out, the husking may stop with that one act. If it does not come even after nine efforts, it has to be repeated until the grain emerges. This emerging of rice puts an end to the husking. So also in Jnana Nishtha, the number of the repetitions cannot be previously stated or prescribed. All that can be said is, that repetition has to continue till one experiences the dawn of knowledge. In Karmas the repetition of an action is for the definite number of times enjoined by the Vedas.

३००. निदिध्यासनं च अन्तर्नीता आवृत्तिगुणैव क्रियाभिधीयते ।

300. Nididhyasana (concentration or meditation) is in the nature of repetition (of idea) carried on within. (S.B. 4. 1-11).

३०१. परब्रह्मविषयेऽपि प्रत्यये तदुपाय उपदेशेषु आवृत्तिसिद्धिः ।

301. On the subject matter of Supreme Brahman also, and in teaching the means, repetition (of ideas) is thus established. (S.B. IV 1-2).

Its fruit a Drishta one

Introduction :

After effort comes the result. Then the endeavour comes to a stop automatically. In the Vyasa Sutras also the Sadhana Chapter is III and Phala Chapter is IV and the last.

३०२. अनवगमनिवृत्तेः दृष्टत्वात् दृश्यते हि एकत्वविज्ञानादेव अनवगमनिवृत्तिः ।

302. Removal of ignorance is a positive experience. We actually see that the realisation of unity alone dispels ignorance. (Br. 1. 4-8).

Note :—See note to 289.

३०३. अविद्यातमोनिवर्तकस्य ज्ञानस्य दृष्टकैवल्यफलावसानत्वम् ।

303. The fruit of knowledge (realisation) dispelling ignorance and darkness is seen to culminate in the attainment of the Absolute (Brahman).

३०४. न चायं अवगतिः अनार्थिका भ्रान्तिर्वा इति शक्यते वक्तुम् ।
अविद्यानिवृत्तिफलदर्शनात् बाधकज्ञानानन्तराभावाच्च ।

304. It cannot be said that this knowledge is purposeless or illusory because it is seen to dispel ignorance; nothing further is seen to contradict or mar it. (S.B. 2. 1-14).

Note :—There is often the allegation against meditation that its results are all hallucination of the mind, as, say, in a delirium or dream. The assertion of Sankara here is to meet this charge.

The man is no more a slave to desires, he is extremely calm and joyful. These qualities he did not have before. Not only this, but these traits of his are not momentary but remain to continue as a part of his nature permanently. How have these come about? By realisation, by the new insight.

३०५. अविद्यापगममात्रत्वात् ब्रह्मप्राप्तिफलस्य ।

305. The realisation of Brahman is brought about by the mere cessation of ignorance. (Br. 1. 4-10).

३०६. अक्रियामात्रत्वात् व्युत्थानस्य ।

306. Renunciation is the mere giving up of actions. (Ait. Intr. P-14).

३०७. व्युत्थानं तर्हि अर्थप्राप्तत्वात् न चोदनार्हम् ।

307. As renunciation follows as a consequence of the discussion and as a decision thereon, it needs no specific Vedic injunction (for the purpose).

३०८. उपलब्धुः अनुपलभ्यत्वात् ।

308. The knower cannot become an object to be known. (Tai. 3-10-4).

Note :—The inner witness (the Self) can never become an object of senses or the mind.

३०९. मन एव केवलं रूपज्ञाननिमित्तं योगिनाम् ।

309. In the case of Yogins the mind alone is the cause of perception of forms, etc. (Br. 1. 4-2).

Note:—It is one of the many powers that come to a Siddha, but which is not displayed by him usually. It is recorded in Sri Ramana Maharshi's life that once he told one of his teacher-devotees who was late for his school: "Go at once. Your headmaster is at the gate of the school, awaiting your arrival." The teacher started at once from the Asram and when he reached the school gate, the headmaster was actually awaiting him. So Siddhas can perceive without the aid of the senses.

३१०. ज्ञानाभ्यासश्च प्रधानं इह यतीनां अनुष्ठेयम् ।

310. Sanyasins have chiefly to take to the practice of knowledge (meditation on Self). (Br. 3. 4-40).

Note :—Abhyasa has been defined by Sankara in Gita (Chapter VI—35), as चित्तभूमौ कस्यचित् समानप्रत्ययावृत्तिः चित्तस्य "The repetition of one idea in the field of the mind by mental effort."

३११. स्वसंवेद्येनैव अव्यवहितेन विद्यासमर्पितेन स्वास्थ्येन तत्सिद्धिः ।

311. That (supreme realisation) is attained by that "stand in oneself" or quietude which can be but experienced by oneself, which has no obstructions, and which is conferred by knowledge (meditation). (S.B. 4. 3-14).

Note :—All the old Samskaras which draw man to sense objects are real obstructions to meditation of the Self. In perfect meditation these obstructions should gradually but absolutely cease. This is one of the signs of right or successful meditation.

३१२. फलत्वप्रसिद्धिरपि मोक्षस्य बन्धनिवृत्तिमात्रापेक्षा न अपूर्वजननापेक्षा ।

312. The well-known result (of knowledge), namely Moksha, is merely the removal of bondage and not generation of something new. (S.B. 4-2).

३१३. जगदुत्पत्त्यादिव्यापारं वर्जयित्वा अन्यत् आणिमाद्यात्मकं ऐश्वर्यं मुक्तानां भवितुमर्हति । जगद्व्यापारस्तु नित्यसिद्धस्य ईश्वरस्य ।

313. Excluding the activity of creating the world, etc., all the other Lordly powers like "becoming minute", etc., come to the Liberated; but the power of creating the world, etc., belongs solely to the ever-existing Isvara.

३१४. दृष्टार्था च विद्या प्रतिषेधाभावमात्रेण अर्थिनमधिकरोति ।

314. One who has the desire for it can take to Brahma Vidya whose result can be directly experienced here, for the simple reason that there is no prohibition on him to do it. (S.B 3. 4-38).

Note :—Sastra prescribes certain qualifications, like being a Brahmin or Kshatriya, etc., for the performance of rituals. Not so in the case of Jnana. He who has a desire for it may take it up, for meditation belongs to Karmas with "seen" results.

३१५. परया भक्त्या भगवन्तं तत्त्वतो अभिजानाति, यदनन्तरमेव ईश्वरक्षेत्रज्ञ भेदबुद्धिरशेषतो निवर्तते ।

315. By supreme Jnana Nishtha is the Lord known as He is, and only afterwards all consciousness of difference between Isvara and the individual Self disappears altogether. (G. 18-55).

Note:—This is the same as 286.

३१६. ज्ञानस्य अविद्यानिवर्तकत्वे सति, दृष्टकैवल्यफलावसानत्वात् ।

316. That Jnana, by removing Avidya (ignorance), culminates in the Absolute state (the Self) is a result which can be experienced. (G. 18-66).

Note:—When the seeming attachments of the Self to the body, to mind with all its passions and to Buddhi with all its

various decisions, have ceased and Atman remains absolutely unsoiled and unattached, this state ends in positive experience and certainty that all is bliss.

३१७. भ्रान्तिप्रत्ययनिमित्तमेवायं संसारभ्रमो न तु परामार्थः इति सम्यग्दर्शनादत्यन्तमेवोपरम इति सिद्धम् ।

317. The illusion of Samsara is due solely to an illusory notion and is not absolutely real. So the conclusion is clear that the right knowledge conduces to the absolute cessation of Samsara. (G. 18-66).

Note:—In reality, all the illusions of the mind are while it has its attachment to the world. This attachment to body and mind and the world is not a reality. All these attachments cease on realisation. This is the net conclusion of Vedanta Sastra.

३१८. शरीरारम्भकस्य कर्मणो नियतफलत्वात् सम्यक् ज्ञानप्राप्तौ अप्यवश्यंभाविनी प्रवृत्तिः वाङ्मनःकायानां, लब्धवृत्तेः कर्मणो बलीयस्त्वात्, मुक्तेष्वादिप्रवृत्तिवत्, तेन पक्षे प्राप्तं ज्ञानप्रवृत्तिदौर्बल्यं, तस्मात त्यागवैराग्यादिसाधनबलावलंबनेन आत्मविज्ञानस्मृतिसंततिः नियन्तव्या भवति । न अपूर्वा कर्तव्या ।

318. Since the resultant of past actions that led to the formation of the present body must produce definite results, speech, mind and body are bound to function even after the emergence of the strong and clear conviction about Self-knowledge. For actions that are bearing fruit are stronger than faith in the knowledge of the Self; as for instance, an arrow that has been let fly, continues its course for some time. Hence the operation of knowledge is weaker than past Samskaras (and liable to be overpowered by them). Therefore there is need to regulate the train of remembrance of the knowledge of Self by having recourse to means such as renunciation and dispassion. This train (of remembrances, etc.) is not to be understood and performed as a "new" injunction of Vedic rites. (Br. 1. 4-7).

Note:— पूर्व is old, i.e. as are the natural desires for eating, sleep, fear, etc.; अपूर्व is not old, but new, not born out of instincts like the acts mentioned above. Vedic Karmas do not spring from instinctive impulse. Unless the Vedas prescribe them, one will not know them. So they are called Apurva Karmas. In their details, etc., the only guidance are the Vedas. The directions of the Vedas have to be obeyed and no questions asked. Their results are "unseen."

This Jnana Nishtha is not like that. All the explanations above relate to the last three Sanskrit words of No. 318.

The rest of the passage explains why there should be the exercise of ethics. Rituals are a sort of Karma. They are Pravritti Karma. Control of mind and passions is Nivritti Karma. If rituals are to be abandoned why not control of mind also ? The passage explains the necessity for ethics, as also for the abandonment of Pravritti Karma.

३१९. सर्वदुःखविनिर्मुक्तैकचैतन्यात्मको अहं इत्येष आत्मानुभवः ।
न चैवं आत्मानमनुभवतः किञ्चिदन्यत्कृत्यं अवशिष्यते ।

319. The experience of the Self culminates in the consciousness that one is entirely free from all miseries and one's nature is the one (undivided) Consciousness. For one who is thus experiencing the Self, there is nothing else to do. (S.B. IV. 1-2).

Note:—The experience of Self-realisation is the utter unity with all, as infinite Consciousness and bliss. Then the Sadhana stops. The Sadhaka has no further Karma or duty to do. This last sentence should not be taken to mean that there will be no flow of beneficial activities from them. But they will flow just like the fragrance from the flower. The Buddha's activities after his realisation, or Sankara's activities to purify and make vital the Hindu religion and society, or Swami Vivekananda's magnificent activities in recent times, belong to this category. They

are not even Nivritti Karma, much less Pravritti Karma. They are beyond all Sastras and part of the divine activity sustaining the world.

३२०. ब्रह्मभावश्च मोक्षः ।

320. Moksha is (Atman) becoming identical with Brahman. (S.B. I. 1-4).

Note:—Moksha is the Atman bursting its present bonds of identification with the body and mind; then Atman comprises all. It has expanded vastly and has become Brahman. This is the Parama Purushartha, the supreme end of the Vedas and the Hindus, and should be that of all in the universe. This, being Truth, is the property of all.

Mantra Japa

३२१. एवं च मनोवृत्तित्वे मन्त्राणां वृत्तिः एव अवर्त्यंत इनि मानसः जपः उपपद्यते । अक्षरविषय स्मृत्या आवृत्या मन्त्रावृत्तिः स्यात् इति चेत् न; मुख्य अर्थ असंभवात् ।
मनोवृत्युपाधि परिच्छिन्नं मनोवृत्तिनिष्ठं आत्मविज्ञानं मन्त्राः इति ।

321. Thus Mantras are Vrittis of the mind. (Vritti means Vital ideas, emotions and other modifications). So it is quite appropriate that in mental Japa, only the Vrittis are being repeated.

Why not this repetition of a Mantra consist of the repetition of memorised sounds or letters (of the Mantra)? No, it cannot be. The chief element of Mantra does not function then. Mantra is mentation about Atman, conditioned and limited by the mind and rooted in the mind itself. (Tai. II-3).

Note:—Sankara's attempt is to clear up a great and popular misconception on this important topic.

The issue is pointedly raised here, as Mantra Japa (repetition of Mantra) plays a very important part in spiritual prac-

tices. Japa is but the plant which later turns into the sturdy tree of concentration and meditation.

Mantras are learned, at first at least, by rote, without understanding the meaning and so Mantra Japa becomes mere repetition of words without a knowledge of the meaning. No emotion or light is generated in the mind; but only a mechanical utterance goes on. The question pointedly raised here by Sankara is "Cannot this be considered as Mantra Japa even though it is only the repetition of the sound of the Mantra with the aid of the memory, but without its evoking any emotion or light (Vritti) in the mind?" "No," says Sankara. The soul of Mantra is the Vritti it evokes in the mind. If the mind is not suffused with emotion and light simultaneously with the utterance of the sound, the Japa cannot perform its function of enlightening and ennobling the mind. Japa is to purify and strengthen the mind, by producing a transformation for the better. If this factor does not enter into Japa, it is lifeless.

The passage here may be read with great advantage with Nos. 33, 34, and 185. 33 urges that a right comprehension of the meaning of Vedic passages will alone conduce to welfare; 34 emphasises that one should not confuse the sound form with the object denoted; they are quite distinct; 185 warns that, in making a Japa of Mahavakya "Tat Twam Asi", "Thou art that", one should not stray away from the meaning or Bhava of the Mantra, i.e. the emotion and light meant to be generated by this great Mantra. These should never be lost sight of. Some may consider all these as the **obiter dicta** of Sankara.

३२२. ब्रह्मविद्यायाः फलं सर्वभावापत्तिः।

322. The realisation of Brahman leads to identity with all. (Br. 1-4-10).

Note:—Though it is difficult to conceive and believe this, it is the emphatic contention of the Sastras according to the Advaitins.

३२३. न हि महावीर्येषु वामदेवादिषु हीनवीर्येषु वा वार्तमानिकेषु मनुष्येषु ब्रह्मणो विशेषास्तद्विज्ञानस्य वा अस्ति ।

323. There is no difference as regards Brahman or the realisation of it between the giants like Vamadeva and the human weaklings of today. (Br. 1-4-10).

Note:—The sage Vamadeva was a giant amongst men and so he was capable of realisation. Can the weaklings, the men of today, attain Brahman? One can have such a doubt. The Upanishads themselves give us the assurance that realisation is quite possible for men even in these days and in spite of their weakness.

३२४. अविद्यापगममात्रत्वात् ब्रह्मप्राप्तिफलस्य । यथा लोकैः दृष्टः चक्षुषः आलोकेन संयोगः यत् कालः, तत्काले एव रूपाभिव्यक्तिः ।

324. As in the world a form is revealed as soon as it comes within the range of sight of the observer's eye, similarly the very moment one has the realisation of the supreme Self, ignorance regarding it must disappear. (Br. 1-4-10).

Note:—This makes the meaning of Self-realisation clear. As we see a table before us, the Rishis see the Self or God. Ramakrishna Parmahamsa told Vivekananda that he saw God much more really than he saw Vivekananda before him.

So Self-realisation is called अलौकीक प्रत्यक्षः direct perception, but not of this world. This is what Sankara means when he states that Jnana (knowledge) is वस्तुतन्त्र, dependent on the object as it is.

Mantra Japa; for how long ?

Introduction :

A question may be raised here about the dawn of this new awareness of Brahman and the identity of one's Self with all. Is it the first consciousness (आद्यप्रत्ययः) that dispels the ignorance or the last consciousness (अन्त्यप्रत्ययः) that dispels ignorance or the

stream of continuous consciousness (प्रत्यय सन्ततिः) ? प्रत्ययः = consciousness).

३२५. अविद्या शोक मोह भयादि दोषनिवृत्तेः प्रत्यक्षत्वात् । आद्यो अन्त्यः संततः असंततः । इत्यचोद्यम् एतत् । अविद्यादि दोषनिवृत्ति फलावसानत्वात् विद्यायाः । य एव अविद्यादि दोषनिवृत्ति फलकृत् प्रत्ययः आद्यः अन्त्यः संततः असंततः वा, सः एव विद्या इत्यभ्युपगमात् । न चोद्यस्य अवतार गन्धः अपि अस्ति ।

325. As the realisation produces palpable results, viz. the cessation of such evils as ignorance, grief, delusion and fear, there can be no question about its removing ignorance, whether it (the Pratyaya) be first or last, continuous or non-continuous; for knowledge or awareness culminates in producing the cessation of ignorance and other evils. Any consciousness that produces this result, whether first or last, continuous or non-continuous, is knowledge. So there is no scope whatsoever for any question. (Br. 1-4-10).

Note:—There cannot be any regulation about the number or the length of time the Japa has to continue. The aim is the dispelling of ignorance, grief, fear and delusion, which dispelling one can palpably experience. All that can be said about the length of Japa is that it stops only when this experience dawns. One may get it even at the first attempt; another only at the end of his life; some by very long and unbroken practice; others with practice broken at intervals. Anyhow it only stops when its result is "seen" as husking stops when rice is "seen". Thus no limit can be prescribed for the repetition.

Varna Dharma

३२६. ब्राह्मणस्वभावस्य सत्वगुणः कारणम् । तथा क्षत्रियस्वभावस्य सत्व उपसर्जनं रजः प्रभवः; वैश्यस्य तम उपसर्जनं रजः प्रभवः; शूद्रस्य रज उपसर्जनं तमः प्रभवः । प्रशान्ति ऐश्वर्य ईहा मूढता दर्शनात् चतुर्णाम् । जन्मान्तरकृत-संस्कारं प्राणिनां वर्तमानजन्मनि स्वकार्य अभिमुखेन अभिव्यक्तः स्वभावः,

सप्रभवो येषां गुणानां, ते प्रभवाः गुणाः । ननु शास्त्रेण विहितानि ब्राह्मणादीनां शमादीनि कर्माणि कथं उच्यते सत्वादिगुण प्रविभक्तानि इति? न एषः दोषः, शास्त्रेण अपि ब्राह्मणादीनां सत्वादि गुण विशेषापेक्षया एव शमादीनि कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि । न गुण अनपेक्षया इति ।

326. The basis of the characteristic of the Brahmin is the Satwa Guna. Similarly, the basis of the characteristic of the Kshatriya is Rajo Guna predominating Satwa, of the Vaisya is Rajas predominating Tamas and of the Sudra is Tamas predominating Rajas. It is observed that the main characteristics of these four are respectively, calmness of the mind, overlordship (over others), desire and stupidity.

(What is this Swabhava ?) It is the accumulated impressions left by the actions done in previous births which, being ready to go into action, manifest themselves now. Gunas have these Samskaras or Swabhavas as their source. Is it not the Sastra which prescribes the characteristics of the Brahmin and others ? How is it stated here that Gunas are the determining facts of Varnas ?

There is no inconsistency. Even the Sastras have prescribed these on the basis of Gunas (nature of the manifesting Samskaras) and not without reference to the Gunas of the man. (G. XIII-41).

Note:—Varna is the four-fold occupational division of the old Aryan society. Sankara gives the psychological basis of this division; he points out that it is not an arbitrary division imposed from above. Nor is it a division based on parentage. But this division is natural and psychological and manifests itself even from birth by the nature of the activities one spontaneously takes to.

This spontaneity is quite natural, being based on "one's Poorva Janma Samskaras," the impressions carried from the previous births. Man's mind is not a **tabula rasa** at birth. It is

potentially charged with the resultant of the past activities as they have reacted in the mind. So one's mind is a formed or developed one even at birth; and it is in accordance with these Samskaras that he plays his part in society. A wise society should recognise this and allow full scope for the action of this natural law of mental difference even at birth.

Sankara accepts the Sankhya proposition of the three Gunas in the make-up of the world and man. The evolution is from Tamas to Rajas and from Rajas to Satwa and from Satwa to a state transcending the three Gunas. They naturally get mixed and then one predominates over all the others. Thus Sankara defines that person in society as a Brahmin who brings with him his Satwa qualities at birth and so manifests calmness, etc., easily and naturally; so with other Varnas. It is better that it is recognised by society as such. One's previous Samskaras account for one's Varna and not one's parentage; the latter has not been mentioned at all.

Sankara gives a rational basis of Varnas, but does not connect it with parentage, as is most emphatically done by pandits now-a-days.

What refreshing ideas are these! How life-giving a guidance for social relationship in modern times!

Why does Sankara deal with Varna Dharma when his interest is mainly spiritual and not social? According to Sankara, the special teaching of the Gita is that the Varna Dharmas, the social duties of the Varnas, can be and ought to be used for spiritual benefit.

Even more than the rituals, the social duties of the Varnas afford better facilities for the exercise of Karma Yoga, the means to dissolve the bondage caused by Karmas, good and bad. Secular activity with "seen results" (drishta phala) gives better opportunity for the exercise of the equanimity of mind in failure or success.

In the introduction to the Gita, Sankara observes, even though a proper discharge of one's Varna Dharma by each leads him to Heaven, the Karmas can be turned also into a field for the exercise of Karma Yoga, if these are done unattached or if they are offered as worship to God. Arjuna has come to the battle, dictated by his Samskara, and he is told not to flinch from battle for fear of causing death to Gurus and grand-fathers and relations and thus incurring sin. If the battle is to be gone into without any sense of ego, and out of a sense of unavoidable duty, but with non-attachment, such a battle not only does not bring about bondage, but will form a means to purify the heart. Chitta Suddhi is the very basis of higher spiritual life. Performance of the Varna Dharma is thus connected with spiritual life.

CHAPTER V

SOME FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS OF SANKARA

Sankara has built up his wonderful system of philosophy more on commonsense than on tenets taken from the Vedas. His system is thus not dogmatic. As such it has extorted universal approbation and admiration; it stands unshaken by the discoveries of modern science, unlike many other systems. Hence the present-day slogan 'Science and Spirituality' is quite appropriate. It implies that Sankara will easily be accepted by all.

The one fundamental tenet, nay, truth, accepted by Sankara from the Upanishads is ब्रह्मात्मैक्यत्व वाद, the proposition that 'Atma is one with Brahman', the most glorious discovery of the Rishis. Sankara's supreme effort was to concentrate all the resources of his brilliant intellect and skill in reasoning, in the exposition of this seemingly incredible doctrine.

In India philosophy had to incorporate 'Religious' truths and enunciate its wide propositions so as to include these truths also. Philosophy in India thus supplies the principles for the Higher Religious Practice. The relation between Philosophy and Religion is consequently very intimate unlike as in the West. Philosophy in India has been able to accommodate all scientific truths.

The most universal proposition enunciated by Sankara is:

३२७. इष्टप्राप्त्यनिष्टपरिहार चिकीर्षा । स्वाभाविका, सर्व प्राणिषु दृष्टत्वात् ।

327. The desire to come by good and to ward off evil is natural; it is seen in all creatures.

Note:—This is a proposition which will be readily accepted by all. Religious practices too have, all of them, their basis on this psychological proposition.

Man takes to Religion, not because of the commands of the Scriptures, as most often represented. On the contrary, the scriptures themselves are the brilliant records left by our religious geniuses, in their attempts to attain happiness and to ward off unhappiness.

There is a very clear evolution in the Indian religious thought as in every sphere of life. The earlier portions of the Vedas, the Samhita and the Brahmana portions, consist of highly poetical passages in praise of the Devas requesting the gods to use their mighty powers to confer boons on mankind and ward off their calamities. These praises are contained in the Samhitas. The Brahmana portion records the mysterious practices adopted for this purpose; namely the various Yajnas, sacrifices. The whole line of thought and practice was conceived as beyond the ken of the senses and even reason. So Sankara characterises these as:

३२८. अदृष्टार्थविषयत्वात् वेदस्य ।

328. The sphere of the Vedas is the "Unseen" (beyond the senses).

Note:—The Devas were not visible beings of this world. They were in Heaven. The practices adopted had also unseen virtues. Though done here, they had unseen potency to please the gods in Heaven.

These practices were not always successful in achieving the desired ends. The wiser heads began to think about the matter more seriously. A higher evolution in thought was the result.

While concentrating their minds on the problem continuously and for long, they found out that there was more mysterious world within man himself. Many new questions demanded answers. Is there any connection between the new inner world and the outer world? What is it that keeps order in these worlds? The sphere of the "Unseen" had widened. The scope

of the Vedas too widened. The solution to these mysteries are recorded in the Upanishads which show a distinct evolution in thought. Two important conclusions were arrived at. The dependence on Devas was futile. The real and inexhaustible mine of happiness was this new field, the inner core of man himself. The latter is stated as:

३२९. आत्मा हि सच्चिदानन्दस्वरूपः ।

329. The ever existing Atman is by its very nature Existence—Knowledge—Bliss absolute.

Note:—These are again in the "Unseen World"; not within the ken of ordinary senses and too difficult to be acquired, but none the less true. Sankara has held fast to this great truth of the Upanishads. The exposition of the truth is the sheet anchor of his philosophy.

If all the earlier religious efforts were meant to tame the Devas of the other world, the later religious efforts were turned to tame the rebellious mind to enable one to discover the pure Atman.

That portion of the scriptures containing Hymns to Devas and description of the rituals to be adopted to win their favours, is called Karma Kanda (ritual-portion). The later part is called Vedanta (closing portion of the Veda) and consists of the ten or more Upanishads.

Both the parts are meant to deal with matters beyond the sense organs. Both have a common aim and purpose, to satisfy the natural zest for Happiness".

But a closer examination will show that, in spite of this common incentive, the methods adopted are not the same, but different due to the evolution of religious thought and practice. They appeal to two different natures; one thinking that happiness comes from outside while the other is convinced that all happiness is from within. This has been described by Sankara:

३३०. बाह्य विषय रागाद्यपहृतचेतसो न शास्त्रं निवर्तयितुं शक्तं नापि स्वभावतो बाह्य विषय विरक्त चेतसो विषयेषु प्रवर्तयितुं शक्यम् (Br. 2-1-20).

330. Sastras are quite powerless to divert a man whose mind is swayed by passions for outside objects; nor are the Sastras powerful enough to compel a man to take to the world of senses, when the mind has become naturally averse to it.

Note:—Two things are made clear by Sankara here. The first is that the Vedas have no compelling power, like a master has over his servant to make the latter act even against his own natural bent.

The second is that those who are extroverts will run outside for happiness while the introverts will turn their minds inward for their happiness.

In terms of religion, the less evolved will take to rituals and ceremonies to win the favour of Devas in Heaven, as against the more evolved who find the Joy within by control of mind and meditation. The former perhaps constitute a large majority in the world; but their example will not be adopted by the more evolved, with regard to the so called commands, of the Karma Kanda of the Vedas. Sankara here observes:

३३१. ज्ञापकं हि शास्त्रं न तु कारकं।

331. Sastras only reveal; they never command.

Note:—Sastras reveal the appropriate means, whether it be for the attainment of Heaven or of Atmajnana. They do not compel anyone to take up any particular means. It is left to man to make his choice according to his inclination.

This implies a warning to the fanatics of either Path. The devotees of Karma should not impose their faith on Jnanis, stating that the way of Karmas is the only one prescribed in the Vedas. Nor should there be any fanaticism on the Jnani's side. One should not be impatient that all do not take to his dear path.

This is the stage where Sankara's conception regarding Karma and Jnana are to be understood, for religious activities take either of these two forms. Sankara's difinitions of Karma and Jnana are as follows:

३३२. (अ) क्रिया हि नाम सा यत्र वस्तु स्वरूप निरपेक्षैव चोद्यते, पुरुष बुध्यर्धाना च (S. B. 1-1-4).

(ब) न वस्तु याथात्म्य ज्ञानं पुरुषबुधयपेक्षं; वस्तुतन्त्रमेव तत। एवं भूतवस्तु विषयाणां प्रामाण्यं वस्तुतन्त्रं (S. B. 1-1-2).

(क) अतो न पुरुष व्यापारतन्त्रा ब्रह्म विद्याः। किं तर्हि, प्रत्यक्षादि विषय-ज्ञानवत् वस्तुतन्त्रा।

(ड) न ज्ञाने क्रियायामिव विकल्पस्य संभवः।

332. A (Vedic) Karma is that in which a (Vedic) injunction operates without regard to the nature or truth of things involved; further it is dependent on mental activity or imagination of the performer.

(b) The truth about the real nature of a thing is not dependent on the mental activity of a person. It corresponds to the nature of the thing. So the valid knowledge of an existing thing is dependent on the nature of the thing.

(c) So the meditation to understand Brahman is not an act of speculation or imagination of the enquirer; on the other hand, just like our knowledge of objects derived from the senses, it corresponds to the nature of the thing under investigation.

(d) There cannot be alternatives in the nature of the truth of a thing as there can be alternatives in Karma.

Note:—The distance between Madras and Delhi, as the crow flies, is a fixed, unalterable one; but travelling between the two places may be by many routes.

Comments on (a), (b), & (c)

(a) In Vedic rituals Devas invoked have no forms; the performer can conceive of them as he pleases. It is even

said that the sounds uttered for the invocation are the forms of the Devas. Thus some factors depend on the play of the imagination of the performer. The aim here is to gain fruit, and not to know the truth of any thing.

(b) & (c) Truth is about an existing thing and corresponds to its nature. Knowledge of the truth does not allow scope for speculation or imagination. The height of a person 6 ft. high cannot be 6 ft. 1 inch or 5 ft. 11 inches according to the fancy of the measurer. It is 6 ft. alone.

So in the case of the Existing Brahman or Atman, meditation should not stray into speculative or imaginative act. The attention should be to see the hidden truth as it is.

So Brahma Jnana is not an act of speculation or imagination. By a new instinct is "seen" or "realised" the Existent Brahman as it is. It is like a healthy eye, say, seeing a colour as it is.

Jnana is the new insight of the exact true nature of Brahman as it is. Thus Brahma Vidya is the science of Brahman or the philosophy of it. There is no trace of theology in it, even though the exposition of the subject is in the form of a commentary on Scriptures or Vedas.

By declaring Truth about Brahman as Vastutantra (having exact correspondence with the nature of the thing) Sankara has taken a rank both among Scientists and Philosophers.

But the school of Karma, with its powerful advocate Acharya Jaimini, had gained prominence in India just for a few centuries before the advent of Sankara. The wave of Buddhism and Jainism was waning. The main contention of the school of Karma was that rituals alone are the import of the Vedas; the Upanishads, not prescribing any Karma, are mere Arthavadas, are mere subsidiary portions of the Vedas containing exaggerated panegyrics of the soul, a factor in Karma; so the Upanishads may well be consigned to oblivion.

It has to be noted that the Mimasakas use the word "Karma" in a very restricted sense of the rites mentioned in the Vedas, with fire and fuel. It does not mean any human activity. It is against the idea of this "Karma" with fire and fuel, as the be-all and end-all of the whole Vedas, that Sankara had to take up his powerful cudgel. He allowed it a place but exposed its wild pretensions as extremely untenable. When he said "Abandon all Karmas for your good", his statement applied to **Karma in this restricted sense.** He never advocated inactivity or passivity but called for immense and strenuous effort in another direction. Sandhyavandana (morning and evening meditations) involving no fire or fuel, was not meant to come under his cudgels. In fact it is not "Karma" but an Upasana.

It is well that the Mimamsaka contention is understood. Karmis too admitted that Kamya Karmas and prohibited Karmas are to be given up as they cause rebirth for enjoyment of their fruits. With them Nityakarmas, like Agnihotra, etc., are of a different character altogether. Nityakarmas, they contend, confer though not directly, the Parama Purushartha, the highest ambition of man, the glorious Swarga from which there is no return. Vedas do not mention fruits for Nityakarmas. So they have no fruit as such; they will not entail rebirth. But being the command of the Vedas they cannot be neglected with impunity. Even the Jnanis have to do Nityakarma of this restricted sense, if they are to escape punishment.

Sankara clearly saw the dangerous ignorance and tyranny of this position. It committed a double error. The case was built on error of thought; their attitude towards the Upanishads prevented any light being shed to disclose the error. So he exposed the hollowness of this position vehemently and often, but more in sorrow than in anger. Were they not also the followers of Vedas?

३३३. (अ) कृतस्य क्षयित्वात् (Br. u. 1-4-15).
(ब) अविद्या काम बीजं सर्वं हि कर्म (G. 18-66.)
(क) यद्यपि शास्त्रावगतं नित्यंकर्म तथापि अविद्यावतः एव भवति (G. 18-66).

333. The following simple propositions of his are relevant here:

(a) Anything created is seen to get destroyed.
(b) The seeds of all Karmas are ignorance and desire.
(c) Even though Nityakarma is enjoined by the Vedas it is meant only for the ignorant (the less evolved).

Note:—As Nityakarma was the corner-stone of the Karmis, the wrong ideas regarding them was specially dealt with. Nityakarmas are the directs objects of Vedic injunction. Injunctive sentences are the chief sentences of the Vedas. A sentence to be recognised as a chief sentence has also to possess two qualifications:

(1) It must have undoubted and clear import.
(2) This can be recognised by the promise of a reward; if the latter is absent it is not an important sentence but becomes an Arthavada, a subsidiary one.

These features of a sentence are defined by Sankara as follows:

३३४. निश्चितफलवत् विज्ञानोत्पादकत्वं प्रामाण्यं ।

334. The constituents of a "Valid sentence" are its undoubted import and the promise of reward.

Note:—The injunction regarding the Nityakarmas, as the most "important" of the Karmas should convey the greatest reward. It shall be the Heaven itself. Heaven brings about rebirth. So Nityakarmas too will entail rebirth and are to be treated on a level with Kamyakarmas.

Further if the Vedas impose Nityakarma on all, on Jnanis also, who regard it as of no value for their purpose, Vedas become a tyrant which, it has been shown, they are not. As a matter of fact what are the functions of the Vedas?

३३५. शास्त्रं तु साधनविशेषाण्युपादिशति । पुरुषाः स्वयमेव यथारुचि साधनविशेषेषु प्रवर्तन्ते। शास्त्रं तु सवितृप्रकाशवत् उदास्त एव। (Br u. 2-1-0).

335. Sastras merely advise the means (to the various ends). Man picks up what suits his inclination; Sastra's (attitude) is neutral like the light of the sun.

Note:—So Nityakarmas too are to be given up by one taking to Jnana path.

The glare, glory and magnificence of these Yajnas naturally captivate the mind of man. The fact that they have been set out by the very holy Vedas, heightens this attraction. The rewards promised, the enjoyment of Heaven, the abode of highest joys, makes it impossible to give them up.

Indeed so great is this fascination for Karma that it took eighteen days of argument for Sankara to dislodge the great exponent of Karma, Mandana Misra, from his untenable position.

So the great majority who are not acquainted with the nature of truth as expounded in the Upanishads, will be wedded to rituals all through their life. This is the case not only of the Hindus but of the people of all other religions. In fact Religions are equated with the performance of rituals.

Sankara feels great compassion for the "ignorant" who do not know that their inheritance and birthright, Satchidananda, is within oneself. Why should one drink the ditch water when the Cauvery is flowing near-by? That is why he laboured with Mandana Misra for 18 days. He was richly rewarded; Mandana became the great Advaita Vedantin Sureswaracharya; a very

significant name. Before meeting Sankara, as a Karmin, Mandana was the slave of Devas (Suras). The meeting made him, the Eswara of Suras, the Lord of the Devas. From Slavery to Mastery. That is the great boon that the Upanishads confer.

Jaimini had rated Upanishads as Arthavadas. (See Br. S. III-4-2). The great mission of Sankara was to rescue the Upanishads from the waste-paper basket to which the Mimamsakas had consigned them and hold up their glory before the world. He points out that the means prescribed by the Upanishads alone confer everlasting bliss. He asserts that some more, like Mandana, can cut off their slavery to Karmas by bestowing attention to the understanding of the Upanishads. He emphasises that the study of Karma Kandas is not a necessary preliminary:

३३६. धर्मजिज्ञासायाः प्रागपि अधीतवेदान्तस्य ब्रह्मजिज्ञासोपपत्तेः ।

((S. B. 1-1-1).

336. One can take up the study and understanding of the Vedanta, and the discipline to "know" Brahman, even before the study and investigation of Karmas.

Note:—This is a very important statement. It gives the warrants to the study of Upanishads even before studying Mimamsa. Study of Upanishads is not a logical development of the study of Karma Mimamsa. Only the Upanishads must make a natural appeal to one. The idea that the study of Mimamsa is a necessary preliminary to the study of Sastras, only goes to the making of 'Mandanas'; only a study of Upanishads will open up new vistas and point out the invaluable heritage left to us by our Rishis. This understanding is absolutely necessary to set us on the Jnana path.

३३७. तत्त्वज्ञान फलालोचने हि तत् साधनानुष्ठाने प्रवृत्तिः स्यात् ।

337. Only on pondering over the fruits of the attainment of 'enlightenment' one gets sufficient incentive to put forth the effort to attain it.

Note:—The advice to 'give up rituals' should not be confounded with giving up all efforts and disciplines altogether. Karmas recommended to be given up are merely 'rituals'. So to induce one to take to the long and strenuous effort in the path of Jnana, the glories of Atma Jnana should be held up before him.

The efforts put forth in the Jnana path are far different from the efforts required in Karmas. The latter takes the shape of collecting the various materials: fuel, grains, ghee and lighting up of a fire; all merely exertions of the body. In the Jnana path naturally the intellect and the will come into play. A sense of values has to be cultivated first. This step Sankara calls:

३३८. नित्यानित्य वस्तु विवेकः

338. The discrimination of the eternal from the ephemeral.

Note:—It has been made clear already that even the highest Karmas cause rebirth. Also what is caused is destroyed. So why not ascertain: What does away with Samsara?

The conclusion will be that the Vedic Karmas have to be boldly given up and the disciplines prescribed by the Upanishads taken up and strenuously practised. This is easily said. The implication is that the habits of centuries have to be broken and new lines of thinking and acting adopted instead. This requires a tremendous effort of the Will. What is now required is:

३३९. इहामुत्रफलभोगविरागः ।

339. Renouncing the hunger for the pleasures and joys of this World and the World above.

Note:—Till now the mind and the body were engaged in the attempt to attain the pleasures of the senses. No higher point of view was available. Now the sense pleasures are to be given up and the mind should turn inwards to Atman. A very difficult resolution to carry out. Yet it cannot but be done. This is the new urge.

The breaking up of old lines of thought and habits has to be gradual. Purity and concentration are the new means and not 'Fire or fuel or priest'. These cannot be attained in a jump; hence first cultivate the following:

३४०. शमादि साधन संपत्।

340. New wealth like control of the mind and others.

Note:—The "others" are "control of the senses", "not ruminating over past pleasures", "extreme endurance", "equanimity" and "faith in the Sastras and Guru".

Faith is required for two reasons. The attainment suggested here is not within our sense experience. It is an 'unseen thing' that is promised. We have to take it on faith. The faith becomes easy because the Guru lives the newly promised life. That gives encouragement. Further, faith alone can sustain us in the new effort. This faith and aspiration helps us to the next step.

३४१. मुमुक्षुत्वम्।

341. Ardent desire to be free.

Note:—With the study of the Upanishads, a new light has come on the source of our troubles. This source is now recognised to be the slavery to the passions of the mind and to the dictates of the ego. These have to be replaced. Nay, one has to be absolutely free from the workings of the mind and the ego. Determined and sustained efforts have to be made till success is attained.

See now whether Sankara calls for effort or inactivity. Only the activity is not external but internal and so not seen by others as before.

It is noteworthy that Sankara places the practices "from discrimination to the ardent desire to be free" as the very foundation of higher religious practice. It must be clearly understood that Ethics has been given the most important place in

Hindu religion. Perhaps this is not well understood by Hindus themselves. The charge from the West that Hindus attach no importance to Ethics is thus not correct. According to great Hindu teachers Ethics is the very foundation of Higher Religion.

The above observations are reinforced by the commentaries of Sankara at the very opening of the monumental work, the Sutra Bhashya. The first Sutra is 'Then', 'therefore', "investigation of Brahman," given as one word 'Brahmajignasa'. What is this, 'Then'? After what, is it to be taken up? Sankara answers; 'Then' does not imply after the study of Karma Kanda or performance of Yajnas. They may be dispensed with as stated earlier. The 'investigation of Brahman' will be effective only if one acquires the Ethical excellences like "discrimination, mind control, etc." Ethics, it may once more be emphasised, is far far superior to rituals.

३४२. जिज्ञासा ।

342. The process of जिज्ञासा 'investigation of Brahman'—'ardent desire to realise Brahman', has to be well understood. That is the very aim of the Upanishads. Sankara observes:

३४३. अवगतिपर्यन्तं जिज्ञासायाः ।

343. The desire to know ends only with attainment.

Note:—The attainment here is of the Atman. This desire is not a passing one. It is the intensive zest to know and will last unabated till the realisation takes place. It will face calmly all the rigours of an iron and unpalatable discipline to the very last, not for one life but for many lives, to achieve the objective of freedom. Is there more activity or less activity now?

The whole process of this discipline elaborated above has been stated pithily by the Upanishads:

३४४. आत्मावारे द्रष्टव्यः, श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदि ध्यासितव्यः ।

344. Atman has to be realised; it is to be heard of, reasoned about and meditated upon.

Note:—The last step here is the most important, but the most arduous also. This can be achieved in a proper mental climate for its growth. This is afforded by 'Mind Control, etc.'

The meditation has to deepen and 'ripen'. Sankara describes the stages:

३४५. ज्ञानोत्पत्तिहेतुं सहकारिकारणं बुद्धिविशुद्ध्यादि अमानित्वादि गुणमपेक्ष्य जनितस्य क्षेत्रज्ञ परमात्मैक्यज्ञानस्य स्वानुभवनिश्चयरूपेण अवस्थानं ज्ञाननिष्ठा । (G. 18-55).

345. The supreme devotion to Jnana consists of steadfast meditation aided by all favourable conditions for its rise and 'ripening', namely 'the clearness of understanding, etc.,' and 'humility' which are but the 'attendant causes'. It cultimates in the conviction born out of one's own experience that 'Atman is. Brahman'.

Note:—Here certain terms have to be explained before the whole thing is fully understood. The first is the phrase 'attendant causes'. An analogy will bring out the meaning. In making a pot, the clay is the material cause; it is the clay itself that is now the pot. But, for the making of the pot, besides the clay, a wheel and a stick to revolve it, are also absolutely necessary; they do not find a place in the pot. The wheel and the stick are termed the 'attendant causes' for the pot.

If Jnana is to rise up and attain 'ripeness', some attendant causes are required; they are the 'clearness of understanding, etc.' and 'humility'. The 'clearness of understanding, etc.' are moral exercises stated in verses 51-55 of chapter XVIII of the Gita. 'Humility, etc.' are the twenty moral virtues stated in verses 7 to 11 of the Gita, chapter XIII.

What Sankara emphasises here is that even though these do not add to or take away a jot from the nature of Atman, only in an atmosphere of these virtues and their cultivation does the realisation arise and ripen. Knowledge has to 'ripen', grow clearer and deeper by dispelling the old deadly impressions of the mind. The virtues are the dissolving agents of these Samskaras. Though the Atman is not touched in the least, the old Samskaras, impressions, are outright counteracted. It is how the ethical excellences render their service in effecting Atmajnana. This perspicuous explanation of Sankara about the discipline of Jnana should be kept in mind to help the Sadhakas in their path.

The culmination is self-validating experience. What began as faith, Sraddha, has ended in Experience. This is stated by Sankara as follows:

३४६. ज्ञानसाधनानाम् परिपाकनिमित्तं तत्वज्ञानं ।

346. When the disciplines of Jnana ripen, there ensues the experience of the Truth.

३४७ दर्शनपर्यवसायित्वात् तेषां यदा अवखातादीनि तण्डुलनिष्पत्तिपर्यवसानानि ।

347. The disciplines end when Truth is 'seen'. It is just like the husking of paddy ending when the grains have come out.

३४८. आत्माहि स्वसंविदितः तस्मात् अविद्यानिराकरणे एव ब्रह्मणि कर्तव्यः नतु ब्रह्मविज्ञाने यत्नः अत्यन्तप्रसिद्धत्वात् ।

348. Atma is self-conscious. What is to be effected is the dispelling of the superimposition on Brahman. No effort is needed to know the Atman. It is so very well known.

Note:—The analogy of husking is very relevant. Husking does not create the rice grain; it simply removes the husk, and the grain reveals itself.

Similarly Atmajnana is not created by the disciplines. It is already there; only it has been, so to say, covered by the haze of

the ego, intellect and the mind. This haze is removed by the disciplines.

What is the nature of this final realization of Atman? For a reply to this alone, Sankara takes his authority from the Scriptures, for it is an experience, a "new insight", beyond the senses and reason. The experience is:

३४९. आत्मा वै ब्रह्म ।

349. Atman is indeed Brahman.

Note:—This is a unique experience, quite difficult even to believe. By the process of discipline, the superimpositions, namely the ego, intellect and the mind, are dissolved. The Samskaras have been burned up. The Ego too is gone. The ego is the separative principle. **It separates man from man and man from the world.** When this ego is gone no separation is felt. There is only one Pervasive Principle throughout. This is the 'cosmic consciousness' as termed in the West. This is Sahaja Samadhi as stated in India. God and God alone, the background of man and the universe, remains. Awareness alone is there; love overflows. This grand message of the Upanishads was proclaimed to the world by Sankara. The universal appeal of Sankara is however due to his reliance on facts which are observable by all. It is within the experience of all that man is ignorant of certain things at first but later, by proper study and investigation, he comes to know the very same subjects. Whenever man refers to his 'I', he, in a way, knows about it, but does not know about it clearly, without any haze. This hazy knowledge is the Avidya (ignorance) according to Sankara, and the clear and perfect knowledge of this 'I' is Vidya (knowledge). Man has Avidya at first; but by reasoning, purity and meditation, he removes this Avidya. It is on this palpable experience that Sankara's wonderful edifice is built up.

३५०. आत्मविशेष अनाभिज्ञः कर्मफलसंजाततृष्णः श्रद्धानतया प्रवर्तते इति सर्वेषां नः प्रत्यक्षम् । (G. 13-2).

350. It is patently seen by us all, that persons who have no correct idea of the Atman, but having faith (in Vedas) engage themselves in the various rituals prompted by the desire to gain their fruits.

Note:—Sankara refers here to two things of common knowledge. The first is that many people have no correct knowledge of the Atman, their inner core. Is there anything strange in this ignorance of Atman? People do not know sufficiently about their own material body even. Ignorance, in many common spheres, is evident to all and ignorance of Atman is only one of these. The second point is that not knowing that Atman is the eternal source of joy and peace, they engage themselves in many activities to get joy from outside, and one of these is the performance of rituals. Here Sankara's reliance is not on theology or the Vedas but on ordinary observed facts.

But by the ignorance of Atman, the glory of Atman is not in the least tarnished. The rope remains a rope even though it was mistaken for a snake. This mistake causes fright in the man, makes him bawl out and run for his life. But the rope remained as mere innocent rope and was not in the least responsible for his great distress.

३५१. नहि मिथ्याज्ञानं परमार्थवस्तु दूषयितुं शक्तं ।

351. Any false knowledge regarding a real thing cannot in the least alter or contaminate its true nature.

Note:—Our ideas of a thing may be wrong but the thing is not changed in the least in its nature by our ignorance. We can benefit by it only by its true knowledge. So man's effort should be to gain correct knowledge of things. He should get out of the delusion caused by his senses.

३५२. सम्यक्दर्शनात् एव आत्यन्त उपरमः इति ।

352. So from right knowledge (of things, especially of Atman) arises absolute cessation of our woes; this is the conclusion.

Note:—Here is seen the justification for the unwearying insistence on the attainment of knowledge of Atman by Sankara in preference to all other methods recorded by the Gospels of the World. The disappearance of ignorance of Atman is something which can be experienced in this very life and not a thing which happens only after death as in the case in the promise of Heaven. It is an indubitable experience.

३५३. प्रत्यक्षफलत्वात् च ज्ञानस्य फलविरहाशङ्कानुपपत्तिः कर्मफलेहि स्वर्गादौ अनुभवानारूढे स्यात् आशङ्का भवेद्वा नवेति। अनुभवारूढं तु ज्ञानफलं। सम्यग्दर्शनकालमेव सर्वात्मत्वं संभवति।

353. It is not proper to entertain doubt about the attainment of the fruits of knowledge as it is a matter of experience here and now. In the case of rituals, with regard to their reward like Heaven, etc., doubts are reasonable as to whether these will happen or not, as they are not to be experienced here and now. But right knowledge is confirmed by experience here and now (as the practice of the discipline stops with culmination of the experience). One gets the experience "that one is identical with all" with the dawn of the true and correct knowledge (of the self).

Note:—Thus though the undertaking of the Sadhana was based on the words of the Guru and the Vedas, it ends in experience, that the multiplicity and differences are only appearances on the one basis, Reality, and all are in fact "one" and not manifold. Only the dawn of the new insight, belying all previous experiences, ends all miseries and thus reveals the fountain of eternal happiness. The search now naturally ends. Jnana should be the essential aim. As in Science the test ends in verification, so also it is in Vedanta. Science and Spirituality clasp their hands in union and joy. This emphasis of Sankara on the steadfast discipline of Jnana Nishtha has been very much misunderstood especially by the advocates of Bhakti. Sankara

was not opposed to Bhakti. He is not merely the author of polemical texts but is the composer of exquisitely poetical Stotras about the various embodiments of the one God. No votary of any deity can excel him there. Not only these Stotras attest to this fact of his being a Bhakta; his acceptance of Bhakti finds express mention.

३'५४. सा इयं ज्ञाननिष्ठा आर्तादि भक्तित्रयापेक्षया परा च चतुर्थी भक्तिः इति उक्ता । तया परया भक्त्या भगवन्तं तत्वतः अभिजानाति । (G. 18-55):

354. This Jnana Nishtha (elaborated here) is indeed the same as Para Bhakti (the highest state of Bhakti and not the other three stages of it (mentioned in Gita 7-16). By the Para Bhakti one realises the Personal God in all truth.

Note:—Bhakti most often takes the form of trade with God. "God! I have these difficulties, I adore you, make offerings to you. Kindly help me out of this difficulty." Even the Bhakti Sastras differentiate these four stages. Complete surrender of oneself, body, mind and soul, to God, without expectation of any return, constitutes real Bhakti. This surrender is the same as the dissolution of ego, Buddhi, Mind and Senses, in the path of Jnana. Jnana seeks to know the nature of the soul and finds it identical with Brahman. But Bhakti, seeks to know a God outside and surrenders oneself to that God. Thus in Bhakti also there is an identity with God. In both, the Sadhaka is characterised by a zest to attain the Goal, to the complete exclusion of other objects. To think there is no zest or emotion in Jnana Nishtha is to misunderstand its nature; the zeal in search of the soul inside is called Jnana, and the same zeal in search of God outside, is called Bhakti.

Advaita cannot have any discord with search of truth by a different approach. Sankara expressly affirms this position as quite valid. But in this age of reason and science, it is believed as an axiom that a thing works automatically by itself and it is not necessary to seek for explanation outside it. So the ques-

tion is, "In the search for truth shall we begin with ourselves or shall we start with the background of the universe?" Following the Rishis, Sankara would prefer to understand ourself first. This is more within our grasp than the vast universe. Further this search to know oneself first has the great advantage that when the Truth of the Self is 'known' it is found that it is itself the background of the universe also. The two problems are solved simultaneously. This solution is not an intellectual speculation as is mostly the case in the West, but is a solid experience, as the outcome of a new insight. This insight fulfils the functions of our senses by substituting real experience in the place of the previous abstract ideas. The importance of Jnana Nishtha is such that it can well bear repetition. The implications of Jnana Nishtha, the factors that go to make it up properly, are given by Sankara while commenting on verse 11 of Chapter X of the Gita. It is quite noteworthy, as it gives a concrete picture as to how this glowing light of knowledge is lit up and maintained. It is this glowing Atma Jnana that is capable of dispelling the veil surrounding the soul.

३५५. ज्ञानदीपेन विवेकप्रत्ययरूपेण (अ) भक्तिप्रसाद स्नेहाभिषिक्तेन (ब) मद्भावनाभिनिवेशवातेरितेन (क) ब्रह्मचर्यादि साधनसंस्कारवत् प्रज्ञावर्तिना (ड) विरक्तान्तःकरणाधारेण (इ) विषयव्यावृत्त चित्त रागद्वेष अकलुषित निपातापवरकस्थेन :(फ) नित्यप्रवृत्त एकाग्र्यध्यान जनित सम्यग्दर्शन भास्वता ज्ञानदीपेन, इत्यर्थः ।

355. The topic is "Dispelling the darkness of ignorance by the light of knowledge". Sankara's comment gives the elements of the light.

Here the translation and explanation of the imagery adopted shall go together. Here ज्ञान (knowledge) is compared to a light which is lit up and made to burn with all attention possible and the constituents of the lamp and the light are given also in terms of knowledge.

Note:—The following is a free translation of the passage, which is not exactly in a sentence form. The light of knowledge is in the form of ideas of discrimination. It has components, each marked by letters a, b, c. d, e and f.

(a) The oil of the lamp is the grace of Bhakti, the lamp is filled with this oil.

(b) The flame is fostered by the air current, namely, ardent and burning love for Me (God).

(c) The wick of the light is constituted by Brahmacharya (celibacy) and other restraints making up for for super-consciousness.

(d) On what base does the oil stand? It stands in the mind which has attained dispassion (and so will not allow any leakage of oil).

(e) This light is well protected against the force of wind that might blow it out. It is in a glass case so to say. What constitutes this protection? The knowledge is to be protected against likes and dislikes and aversions which soil the mind. These will, if not protected against, blow away the light. So the knowledge is protected against the desires and aversions which may tear the mind.

(f) How is the light itself lit up? It is lit up by a light born of the even continuing concentration and meditation. This in fact forms the सम्यक्दर्शना. the clearest knowledge, or the new and correct insight.

So this brilliant Insight is just the culmination of concentration and meditation: ज्ञाननिष्ठा । It is born of concentration and meditation. It is preceded by a number of antecedent factors, like the zest for it, dispassion and great reliance on the power of the Hidden Soul or God of the Heaven. Ego cannot bring this about. Ego dies in the process.

Jnana Nishtha is born of zeal and unalloyed emotion to gain the soul. Dispassion has to be attained, strenuous and unbroken meditation has to be gone through. These are the various elements that go to make up real spirituality.

The main proposition of Sankara is that the contention of the Upanishads that "All is One" can be experienced and thus verified for oneself. Is this not a tall claim? Have not passages stating this Supersensuous Truth been explained away by other great Acharyas? Perhaps the Sadhanas of these Acharyas have not ended in this experience. Hence their doubts. But Sankara, supported by the dawn of this new and wonderful "insight" here and now gives expression to it while commenting on Brahma Sutra II-1-14.

३५६. अन्त्यमिदं प्रमाणं आत्मैकत्वस्य प्रदिपादकम् । न अतःपरं किंचिदाकांक्ष्यं अस्ति; सर्वात्मैकत्वविषयत्वात् अवगतेः । नचायं अवगतिः आनार्थिका भ्रान्तिर्वेति शक्यं वक्तुं । अविद्या निवृत्तिफलदर्शनात्; भांथकज्ञानानन्तराभावात् ।

356. This "Insight" dawns at the end in the shape of the knowledge (experience) that "There is Atman Alone". Nothing else remains to be desired. The realisation is "All souls are but One". No harmful results ensue; this is not a hallucination (of the mind). It is 'seen' that all ignorance (false identification with body, etc.) has vanished. Further nothing else happens to efface this unique experience.

Note:—Can it not be that Sankara is speaking here from his own realisation? The words used by him are Pramanand Avagati and no hallucination. There is more than intellectual conviction. They denote "solid experience" which can stand four square to all doubts.

He states that Separateness has altogether vanished; the "One" alone exists. His attempt is a call to humanity to share this unique blissful experience along with him.

CONCLUSION

Spirituality can easily accept science; it is left for Science to step down from its rather arrogant pedestal now and shake hands with her elder sister, Spirituality, which stands on the firm rock of the Spirit in man and the same Spirit behind the Universe.

Thus Sankara has a message to the modern world even though it was uttered several hundreds of years ago.

CHAPTER VI

THE INTEGRATION OF THE DARSANAS

The existence of the six Darsanas in the Hindu philosophical literature, all founded by great Rishis, yet enunciating different conclusions, has been a cause of confusion for the understanding of the right philosophy of the Hindus. So they are explained as six different "view points". Each, it is explained, is a necessary step in the growth of the philosophic thoughts which culminate in Vedanta.

In the field of Sadhana, the three apparently conflicting systems of Vedanta have been reconciled by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa as the three necessary steps in religious Sadhana. Man begins as a Dwaitin, takes God as different from himself and adores Him for grace and Vaikuntha, the abode of Vishnu. But later God is not altogether regarded as different, as He permeates one's whole being. Later still, with deepest purity and Samadhi, one realises that Atman is Brahan Himself.

Similarly the six systems are, it is persuaded, but different rungs in the ladder of philosophy; the topmost rung being Vedanta.

Sankara considers that the Right Insight is one only and there cannot be alternatives in Truth, as in Sadhana. He states:

३५७. क्रियायामिव वस्तुनि विकल्पस्य असंभवात् ।

There cannot be alternatives in Truth as in Kriyas (Rituals).

He further asserts that तत्वज्ञानं तु वेदान्तवाक्येभ्य एव भवति ।

The Samyak Darsana is described in the Upanishads. The form of this experience is आत्मा वै ब्रह्म or its variant सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म (Atman is identical with Brahman, indeed all is Brahman). Any Siddhanta or conclusion other than this is a fallacy of Truth; and however great may be the Rishi who has enunciated any other conclusion than this, has to be held up for being rejected.

Boldness of Rishis

The boldness of Rishis, in asserting their convictions and refuting what is contradictory, should indeed extort one's admiration. There was no malice in this rejection or anything personal in the attempt. It was done merely in the interest of Truth.

This is in glaring contrast with the pusillanimity of the modern Indian philosophers and scholars who cannot bring themselves to say anything against the "sacred views" of the so-called Rishis and therefore say. "No contradictions exist between the systems. The differences are only apparent and not real; the systems constitute only gradations in thought." Sage Jaimini, the founder of Purva Mimamsa system, has been bold enough to assert that there is no necessity or place for God in his system. He is the most reputed expounder of the Vedas. He says, "Vedas are not the revelation of God" as stated by the school of Nyaya. "Vedas, the vast body of hymns and the explanatory passages are self-existing". When God Himself has nothing to do with the Vedas, much less have Rishis to do with Vedas. He rejects the institution of Sanyas. An exponent of Religion having nothing to do with God, Sanyas or Rishis! What a marvel of boldness, this!

Coming to Sage Kapila, his system too has no place for God! Purusha and Prakriti are the adequate basis for every phenomenon in man and the universe. Patanjali, though closely following Kapila in general, however provides for God, Who is but a unique person, being the Eternal Teacher. He is not a creator or preserver or destroyer of the universe. Nor had Sage Kanada, the founder of Vaiseshika system, provided for God. Yet all these four are revered by us all as omniscient Rishis whose opinions are too sacred to be differed from.

Sankara too exhibits the same boldness in battering to pieces the conclusions of these great Rishis, as they (conclusions) are

contrary to Vedanta. In the beginning of the second Pada of the second chapter of Brahma Sutra Bhashya, Sankara expressly states that "the attempt in this Pada is to refute the conclusions of Samkhya and other Darsanas, as the conclusions of these are opposed to Samyak Darsanas" (right insight) set forth by the Upanishads in general. He states his position that "the very purpose of his rigorous enquiry about the exact meaning of Vedanta texts is Samyak Darsana" and for exploding the conclusions contradictory to them.

Sankara himself asks the question, "What is the purpose served by the refutation of other schools and showing antagonism to them"? "No", he replies, "it is better this is not done. Yet the great schools of thought like Samkhya and others are accepted as true by even great men and pass for Samyak Darsana. These people with less intelligence consider them as true, as they are the works of the so-called 'all-knowing' Rishis. So the worthlessness of the conclusions has to be exposed. Hence this attempt at destructive criticism". So Sankara too has but risen to the boldness of the Rishis in rejecting whatever is fallacious even though it is connected with the names of the great Rishis.

Sankara's Unique Method

Sankara does not reject each system in its entirety, but merely exposes the fallacies in each and rejects these. He accepts whatever is sound in the system. A question is often asked, "Can a Rishi be partly right and partly wrong?" "Yes", says Sankara, and he adds, "after rejecting what is false or fallacious, accept the part of it that is sound."

He states in 2-1-1 Sutra Bhashya:

३५८. अर्थैकदेश संप्रति पतौ अपि अर्थैकदेश विप्रतिपत्तेः ।

358. Even though some parts do agree (with Vedanta) yet some other parts of the other schools conflict (with Vedanta). He adds:

३५९. येनतु अंशेन न विरुध्यते तेन इष्टमेव, सांख्ययोगस्मृत्योः सावकाशं ।

359. Where the others do not contradict, they are acceptable, and there we do give place, to Samkhya and Yoga, in this respect.

Sankara's rejection of other schools is not thus total but partial, the rest being accepted by him. The aim of each school is the attainment of the supreme goal of Man. Each enunciates its concept of the goal and forges a method for its attainment. Sankara, in fact, accepts almost entirely the methodology of Yoga for the attainment of the soul. He also accepts the wonderful analysis of the universe and the inner man as expounded by Samkhya. But his charge against them is:

३६०. द्वैति नोहि ते सांख्योगाश्च, न आत्मैक दर्शिनः ।

360. Both Samkhyakas and Yogins are dualists (allow for an infinite number of souls) and they are not seers of the truth. "All souls are but one", is the conclusion of Vedanta.

३६१. " सांख्य योग स्मृत्योरेव निराकरणे यत्नः कृतः ।

361. So the attempt at refutation is directed against Samkhya and Yoga texts. Sankara does not mince at the word "refutation of these two". To hug every part of these Darsanas as right is but exhibition of pusillanimity of mind.

Rejection cum Acceptance

This method is directed at Nyaya-Vaiseshika also. The method evolved by these combined systems is Logic. But Logic by itself cannot lead to the discovery and realisation of Truth, Samyak Darsana. It assists मनन, reasoning, for the attainment of clarity by the mind before serious Sadhana is taken up. Sankara points out the inadequacy of Nyaya for attainment of realisation, but it is otherwise a useful aid to the exposition of Vedantic Truth; the mind has to be made firm by reason before commencing the march on the "unseen path".

Sankara and Purvamimamsa

Here also the principle of rejection cum acceptance has been adopted. The important part in any system is its conclusion; each system has evolved a method of its own to arrive at that conclusion.

Purva Mimamsa's main conclusion is that by the meticulous performance of Nityakarma the supreme end of man can be gained and its non-performance leads to perdition. This conclusion has been utterly demolished as contrary to the declarations of the Vedas. Sankara says:

३६२. मोक्षस्य अकार्यत्वात् मुमुक्षोः कर्मानर्थक्यम् ।

362. Liberation is not the result of an act, so the utter futility of rituals for those who are seeking liberation. But before elaborating the part rejected, portions accepted from Purva Mimamsa may be stated. These are briefly as follows:

1. The Vedas, including Vedanta, are alone our guide in the matters relating to the supra-mental region or in अदृष्टविषय i.e. for the attainment of objectives beyond our senses. Reason cannot reveal the Truth of the Superconsciousness.
2. Adhyayana, "learning by rote of the Vedas", includes the understanding of its meaning.

३६३. दृष्टार्थत्वात् अध्ययनस्य अर्थावबोधपर्यन्तम् इति स्थितिः ।

363. Comprehension of meaning of the Vedic passages is quite necessary before any action based on the Vedas is commenced.

3. The Vedic passages or sentences have to be divided into two, the important and subsidiary, वाक्य and वाक्यशेष.

३६४. वाक्य and वाक्यशेष, विधि and अर्थवाद ।

364. The विधि (injunctions) are the vital part and अर्थवाद are passages either eulogistic or condemnatory of the Injunctions".

These valuable contributions of Jaimini and a few other minor ones have been accepted by Sankara and, what is more, used by him in his arguments in the exposition of Vedanta. This principle has saved Hinduism from "fundamentalism" i.e. taking of every statement of the Scriptures as literally true.

The Principle of selection of Vakyas
A New Contribution of Sankara

Jaimini's dictum for the selection of Vakyas is

३६५. आम्नायस्य क्रियार्थत्वात् आनर्थक्यं अततर्थानाम् ।

365. As the purpose of Veda is to enunciate fruitful actions, passages not having this purpose are "meaningless" i.e. are "Arthavadas".

This dictum justified Jaimini to exclude the Upanishads from the purview of his consideration, as Upanishads were, according to him, "Arthavadas" on Atman and contain no command to Fire-rites. What a boldness in Jaimini to consign the Upanishads to the waste paper basket!

Sankara's constructive genius has come to our help here. His dictum is:—

३६६. न वाक्यस्य क्रियान्वाख्यानं वस्त्वन्वाख्यानं वा प्रामाण्याप्रामाण्यकारणं,
किं तर्हि निश्चितफलवद्विज्ञानोत्पादकत्वं ।

366. The test for authoritativeness or otherwise is not whether a passage enunciates "ritual" or "truth" but whether it has unambiguous meaning and promises a fruit.

No doubt, rituals confer Heaven and other benefits like cattle, children, etc. on the performers. This we take on the authority of one part of the Veda. The Vedanta points out to the attainment of Jnana by Man and "it puts an end to all misery of man", the most valuable fruit. So like other passages accepted by Jaimini, Upanishadic passages, too, cannot be ignored; but on the other hand they should command all respect and attention, because of their most beneficial results. The

narrow definition of "validity of sentences" necessarily compelled Jaimini to exclude Vedanta. Though Jaimini was bold, he had only "a narrow view", and not the "right view".

Vedas are Jnapaka and not Karaka

Sankara viewed the Vedas as Jnapaka (revealing) and not Karaka (commanding), and elevated them to the status of Science, but as the greatest of sciences, Adhyatma Vidya, the Science of Spirituality. In the eyes of Jaimini and his followers the Vedas were a benign but autocratic dictator who ordered the performance of rituals and pointed out their rewards. But some rituals were prescribed to be done daily, and others at stated times, but no fruits were mentioned for these. These constitute the Nitya Karmas and Naimittika Karmas. These were to be performed imperatively, else dire consequences were bound to follow, as Vedic commands had been disobeyed. Thus a horror was raised about non-performance of these. The rituals with boons attached were called Kamya Karma and rituals without boons were called Nitya Karma, daily compulsory rituals. Nitya Karmas in his view are Fire-rites like Agnihotra and others, ordained by the Vedas to be done daily. Sandhya Vandana, Gayatri Japa, Parayana of scriptures, etc. are not viewed by him as Nitya Karmas, as no Fire-rite, in co-operation with wife, is involved here.

Sanyas primarily involves the giving up of the Fire-rites, Agnihotra and others, to enable one to occupy himself with Sravana, "hearing of the Vedas from the Guru", Manana, "cogitating over the new ideas of the Upanishads heard from the Guru" and Nididhyasana, "intensive concentration and meditation". So, Sanyas, involving non-performance of Nitya Karma of Jaimini's brand, according to Jaminini, will lead one to the horrors of Hell. Can Vedas themselves stultify their own pivotal point? Hence, Jaimini's assertion, "No Sanyas", "No Rishis", "No God'. The Vedas are self-existent.

The nightmare of the non-performance of Nitya Karmas of the Mimamsakas had enslaved Hindus for a long time. Sankara lifted this nightmare associated by Jaimini with this non-performance. He argued often to end this slavery. He pointed out, as often as possible, that Nitya Karmas too bear fruits, the highest fruit, the attainment of Heaven on death.

Nitya Karma according to Sankara is no command and as such does not involve disobedience or punishment for non-compliance. If one does not do it, he just loses Heaven. As the Vedas are no dictator but revealer of Truth like science, fear not about non-compliance. Nothing untoward will happen on non-performance of Nitya Karmas. Only one will have to forgo reward of Heaven, which, according to Vedanta, is ephemeral. For Sankara, there are grades in Karmas, with different grades of fruits, the highest of these being Nitya Karma with its fruit as Heaven. But all Karmas inclusive of Nitya Karmas are optional. One may perform them or not, as he desires. If he does them he gets the fruit. Do not dread of Hell if it is not done. Thus the slavery to the Vedas and the nightmare caused by Jaimini, were attempted to be dispelled by Sankara. But the deadly spell cast by Jaimini and his followers on Vedic rituals have not been laid to rest till now.

Sanskrit scholars have normally to study the elements of Mimamsa and thus absorb its curious ideas. As most of them do not read Vedanta, they do not receive the benefits of the corrections made by Sankara.

Perhaps there is a more fundamental reason to hug rituals. Jaimini is typical of an undeveloped religious mind, which conceives the highest ruling authority as a dictator. It is natural for dictators to issue imperative orders, disobedience of which entails condign punishment. Only with Jaimini the self-existing Vedas have taken the place of this dictator.

So rituals, meant for religious infancy, have to be outgrown without any fear whatsoever and they are to be replaced by the scrupulous observance of the indispensable ethics in all our daily activities. Later on, a still higher step also has to be taken, the practice of Vedantic Sadhana.

Vedanta Restored to its Position

But Sankara's mission was not merely to clear the miasma caused by Jaimini's interpretations, but to show the message of the greater side of the Vedas, the Vedanta. Upanishads proclaim the inalienable divine nature of man. The Atman in him, is Brahman, if the cobwebs are removed from the mind. So the great aim of man should be to remove these cobwebs and discover his innate divinity which is ever present in him and never deserts him. So Sankara, while acknowledging the great contribution of Jaimini in the field of exegetics (weighing the importance of sentences), rejected Jaimini's hideous conclusion that Nitya Karma confers the highest end of man. Nitya Karmas have their limited rewards no doubt; but these are ephemeral. They do not conduce to the highest aim as pointed out. Sankara contended:

३६७. मोक्षस्य अकार्यत्वात् मुमुक्षोः कर्मानर्थक्यं ।

367. Moksha is not the result of any act. So for one striving for liberation, rituals are useless.

So the rituals as prescribed by Mimamsakas are no auxiliary to the path of Knowledge.

Karma Yoga in place of Karmas

But rituals can be made auxiliary to Knowledge, if done with detachment to the fruits promised, i.e. as Karma Yoga. This has been pointedly raised and answered by Sankara in his comment on verses 45 and 46 of chapter 18 of the Gita.

३६८. किं स्वकर्मानुष्ठानतः एव साक्षात संसिद्धिः? न किंतर्हि, स्वकर्म निगतः स्वकर्मणा ईश्वरं पूजयित्वा केवलं ज्ञाननिष्ठायोग्यता लक्षणाम् चित्तशुद्धिं बिन्दति

368. Does the purity of mind arise merely by the strict performance of Nitya Karma? No. But how does purity of mind arise? One imbued with a sense of duty should do it as an act of worship to God.

Jaimini has no provision for God in his system of thought. So how can Karma Yoga, act of offering to God, ever come in his system? God has helplessly crept into the system only later on. Jaimini induces slavery to the Vedas. How can purity and freedom grow in an enslaved mind? The sooner this portion of Jaimini's thought disappears from the world of Hindu religious thought, the better for the Hindus The Vedas are no self-existent autocrat; but they are a record of truth like a science. The desires of man decide the nature of the ritual to be adopted; if he has no desires for any of these results he can leave out rituals altogether.

Sankara the Great Integrator

Sankara has integrated the Hindu philosophic thoughts prevalent in his days. Each system has approached the question of the nature of Truth and its attainment in its own way and evolved a method for this investigation. Sankara, as could be seen from his exposition above, has accepted practically the different methods evolved by each of the schools. From the Nyaya-Vaiseshika school he has accepted and used the great intellectual instrument of Logic and commended it for use. But he says:

३६९. श्रुतिमत: तर्को नु संधीयताम् ।

369. Accept Logic so as to conform with the statements of the Vedas.

The field of Logic, by its very nature, is restricted. It goes from seen things to greater unseen things. A known basis must be there. But Vedic Truth is Transcendental and does not exhibit any sign. How can Logic arrive at the Transcendental? But the Vedas have revealed Transcendental Truth. Logic can

come as a handmaid to show the reasonableness of the revealed Truth. After Sravana (hearing the Vedas) comes Manana (reasoning). Logic can help the Vedanta in Manana, thought; it cannot itself reveal the Truth. It can show there is no improbability in Vedic Truth.

Then there are the schools of Samkhya and Yoga. They have made the discovery of the means to transcend the mind, by the control of senses and concentration of mind; nay, by the very cessation of mentation. This has been accepted by Sankara as the very अन्तरंग of सम्यग्दर्शन the inner core in the attempt at right realisation. But to Kapila and Patanjali, souls are infinite in number. This was utterly rejected by Sankara as being against the experience of cosmic consciousness by many saints.

But Sankara's mighty effort was to dispel the miasma and nightmare created around Veda by the short-sightedness of Jaimini. The work of Sage Jaimini is the most popular of the Darsanas as it proposes to give the correct intention of the hoary Vedas respected by all Hindus. Any fault in Jaimini's thought would contaminate Hindu thought. Refutation of Jaimini's conclusion was therefore the most important for Sankara, but at the same time most delicate as it goes against Jaimini, the first Acharya on the Vedas and dealing with rituals so dear to man. Sage Jaimini had evolved the three great rules of interpretation. These were all accepted by Sankara.But Jaimini had insisted on self-existent but autocratic Veda in the place of the God he had ignored. This is not clearly understood by Hindus. Consistent with this idea, Jaimini insisted that by the scrupulous observance of the commands about Nitya Karma, even though they be without fruits, man attains the highest Heaven. Its neglect will automatically bring condign punishment.

Here also Sankara applied the surgical knife more vigorously. The cancer in the system, viz., slavery to rituals as all-

accomplishing was indeed frightful. It was a cancer induced by Jaimini on the body of the Vedas greatly respected by the Hindus. Many feared and still fear that, if the cancer is removed, the body, the Vedas, cannot live. Their fears were groundless. Sankara said, "Do all the Karmas if you want. Even the Nitya Karmas have grand fruits. But I have to dispel the great misunderstanding about them. The fruits of Nitya Karmas are but ephemeral. Also, their non-performance leads to no untoward end."

He also gave Hindus a great view of the Vedas which Jaimini could not but ignore due to his short-sightedness. Sankara applied all the three canons of interpretation of Jaimini to the Vedanta and placed before mankind the glorious heritage proclaimed in them, the Divinity of the Atman in him.

Sankara, like the expert surgeon that he was, examined every system, excised the diseased part and retained the rest for the health of the whole. But for the Hindu, the great respector of the Vedas, his operation on Poorva Mimamsa was rather frightening. Sankara installed God in the place of the Vedas, rid thinkers of slavery to a part of Vedas, and what is more, by holding forth before them the great glory of Vedanta, utterly neglected by Jaimini, he showed mankind its invaluable and inalienable heritage.

The aim of Hindus should be to understand this integrated view of the Philosophies of India, left to them by Sankara. An analysis has to be made of the portions rejected and the portions accepted, his original contribution to Mimamsa like the Jnapaka character of the Vedas, wider test of validity of their sentences, the very limited value attached to even the great Nitya Karmas, the valuable ideas accepted from Samkhya Yoga; these are to be fully accepted. But the coping stone of this integrated system is Brahmatmaikyattwa (the truth that Atman and Brahman are one). It would be an invaluable service if any savant will give this integration its proper form.

APPENDIX

Verses from the Gita

First Group—Rituals not the means to transcend Samsara

Chapter II

No concentration for those fascinated by rituals.

(42-43) The undiscerning who rejoice in the letter of the Veda, who contend that there is nothing else, whose nature is desire and who are intent on heaven, proclaim these flowery words that result in rebirth as the fruit of actions and (lay down) various specialized rites for the attainment of enjoyment and power.

(44) The intelligence which discriminates between right and wrong, of those who are devoted to enjoyment and power and whose minds are carried away by these words (of the Veda) is not well-established in concentration.

(45) The action of the three Gunas is the subject matter of the Veda; but do thou become free, O Arjuna, from this threefold nature; be free from the dualities (the pairs of opposites), firmly fixed in purity, not caring for acquisition and preservation, and be possessed of the Self.

(46) As is the use of a pond in a place flooded with water everywhere, so is that of all the Vedas for the Brahmin who understands.

Chapter VIII

(16) From the realm of Brahma downwards, all worlds are subject to return to rebirth, but on reaching Me, O Son of Kunti (Arjuna), there is no return to birth again.

Chapter IX

Results of Karmas, Temporary.

(20) The knowers of the three Vedas who drink the soma juice and are cleansed of sin, worshipping Me with sacrifices, pray for the way to heaven. They reach the holy world of Indra (the lord of heaven) and enjoy in heaven the pleasures of the gods.

(21) Having enjoyed the spacious world of heaven, they enter (return to) the world of mortals when their merit is exhausted; thus conforming to the doctrine enjoined in the three Vedas and desirous of enjoyments, they obtain the changeable (what is subject to birth and death).

(25) Worshippers of the gods go to the gods, worshippers of the Manes (Pitris) go to the Manes, sacrificers to the spirits go to the spirits and those who sacrifice to Me come to Me.

Second group – Practices or Sadhana for Jnana Paripaka (for ripening of knowledge)

Chapter II

Characteristics of the one steadfast in Jnana (knowledge).

(55) When a man puts away all the desires of his mind, O Partha (Arjuna), and when his spirit is content in itself, then is he called stable in intelligence.

(56) He whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrows and is free from eager desire amid pleasures, he from whom passion, fear, and rage have passed away, he is called a sage of settled intelligence.

(57) He who is without affection on any side, who does not rejoice or loathe as he obtains good or evil, his intelligence is firmly set (in wisdom).

(58) He who draws away the senses from their objects on every side as a tortoise draws in its limbs (into the shell), his intelligence is firmly set (in wisdom).

(59) The objects of sense turn away from the embodied soul who abstains from feeding on them but the taste for them remains. Even the taste turns away when the Supreme is seen.

(60) Even though a man may ever strive (for perfection) and be ever so discerning, O Son of Kunti (Arjuna), his impetuous senses will carry off his mind by force.

(61) Having brought all (the senses) under control, he should remain firm in yoga intent on Me; for he, whose senses are under control, his intelligence is firmly set.

(62) When a man dwells in his mind on the objects of sense, attachment to them is produced. From attachment springs desire and from desire comes anger.

(63) From anger arises bewilderment, from bewilderment loss of memory; and from loss of memory, the destruction of intelligence and from the destruction of intelligence he perishes.

(64) But a man of disciplined mind, who moves among the objects of sense, with the senses under control and free from attachment and aversion, he attains purity of spirit.

(65) And in that purity of spirit, there is produced for him an end of all sorrow; the intelligence of such a man of pure spirit is soon established (in the peace of the Self).

(66) For the uncontrolled there is no intelligence; nor for the uncontrolled is there the power of concentration; and for him without concentration there is no peace; and for the unpeaceful how can there be happiness?

(67) When the mind runs after the roving senses, it carries away the understanding, even as a wind carries away a ship on the waters.

(68) Therefore, O Mighty-armed (Arjuna), he whose senses are all withdrawn from their objects, his intelligence is firmly set.

(69) What is night for all beings is the time of waking for the disciplined soul; and what is the time of waking for all beings is night for the sage who sees (or the sage of vision).

(70) He unto whom all desires enter as waters into the sea which, though ever being filled, is ever motionless, attains to peace, he, and not he who hugs his desires.

(71) He who abandons all desires and acts free from longing, without any sense of 'mineness' or egotism, he attains to peace.

Chapter XII

The characteristics of Para Bhakta.

(13) He who has no ill-will to any being, who is friendly and compassionate, free from egoism and self-sense, even-minded in pain and pleasure and patient.

(14) The Yogi who is ever content, self-controlled, unshakable in determination, with mind and understanding given up to Me—he, My devotee, is dear to Me.

(15) He from whom the world does not shrink and who does not shrink from the world and who is free from joy and anger, fear and agitation, he too is dear to Me.

(16) He who has no expectation, is pure, skilful in action, unconcerned, and untroubled, who has given up all initiative (in action), he, My devotee, is dear to me.

(17) He who neither rejoices nor hates, neither grieves nor

desires, and who has renounced good and evil, he who is thus devoted, is dear to Me.

(18) He who reacts alike to foe and friend, also to good and evil repute, to cold and heat, pleasure and pain and who is free from attachment.

(19) He who holds equal blame and praise, who is silent (restrained in speech), content with anything (that comes), who has no fixed abode and is firm in mind, that man who is devoted, is dear to Me.

(20) But those who with faith, holding Me as their supreme aim, follow this immortal wisdom, those devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.

Chapter XIII

Moral virtues to be practised to create an atmosphere for the growth of Jnana.

(7) Humility (absence of pride), integrity (absence of deceit), non-violence, patience, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity (of body and mind), steadfastness and self-control.

(8) Indifference to the objects of sense, self-effacement and the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age, sickness and pain.

(9) Non-attachment, absence of clinging to son, wife, home and the like and a constant equal-mindedness to all desirable and undesirable happenings.

(10) Unswerving devotion to Me with wholehearted discipline, resort to solitary places, dislike for a crowd of people.

(11) Constancy in the knowledge of the Spirit, insight into the end of the knowledge of Truth—this is declared to be (true) knowledge, and all that is different from it is non-knowledge.

Chapter XIV

Characteristics of Gunatita (one who has transcended the three Gunas).

(22) He, O Pandava (Arjuna), who does not abhor illumination, activity and delusion when they arise, nor longs for them when they cease.

(23) He who is seated like one unconcerned, unperturbed by the Gunas, who stands apart, without wavering, knowing that it is only the Gunas that act.

(24) He who regards pain and pleasure alike, who dwells in his own Self, who looks upon a clod, a stone and a piece of gold as of equal worth, who remains the same amidst the pleasant and the unpleasant things, who is firm of mind, who regards both blame and praise as one.

(25) He who is the same in honour and dishonour and the same to friends and foes, and who has given up all initiative of action, he is said to have risen above the modes.

(26) He who serves Me with unfailing devotion of love, rises above the three Gunas, he is fit for becoming Brahman.

Chapter XVIII

Sadhana to attain Brahman.

(51) Endowed with a pure understanding, firmly restraining oneself, turning away from sound and other objects of sense, and casting aside attraction and aversion.

(52) Dwelling in solitude, eating but little, controlling speech, body and mind, ever engaged in meditation and concentration, and taking refuge in dispassion.

(53) And casting aside self-sense, force (momentum of the passions), arrogance, desire, anger, possession, egoless and tranquil in mind, he becomes worthy of becoming one with Brahman.

(54) Having become one with Brahman, and being tranquil in spirit, he neither grieves nor desires. Regarding all beings as alike, he attains supreme devotion to Me.

(55) Through devotion he comes to know Me, what My measure is and who I am in truth; then, having known Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me.

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GLOSSARY

Abhava	Non-existence.
Abhidhyana	Deep meditation.
Abhyasa	Mental repetition of an idea.
Acharya Jaimini	The author of the Purva Mimamsa system; expounder of the Karma Kanda of the Vedas.
Acharya Vinobaji	The great living disciple of Gandhiji. The initiator of Gramadan movement, the gift of whole villages for the public.
Acharyas	Expounders of a system of Philosophy; preceptors.
Adharma	Unvirtuous act.
Adhiratra	A Vedic rite.
Adhyaropa	Superimposition, like mistaking a rope for a snake.
Adhyasa	Superimposition.
Adrishta	Unseen (result); unseen thing.
Advaita	Non-dual; the system best expounded by Sri Sankara.
Agnihotra	Keeping Sacred Fire according to Vedic rites; the typical Vedic Sacrifice.
Akhyayika	Story.
Akrodha	Non-anger.
Akshara	Having no destruction; eternal.
Amalaka	The Indian gooseberry.
Ambika	Sakti; Mother Goddess.
Amritatvam	Immortality.
Anandasram	The hermitage of the late Swami Ramdas in Cannanore District, Kerala State.
Anatman	Non-self.

Anima	The Psychic Power of becoming extremely small in size.
Anirvachaneeya	Indescribable.
Anumana	Inference.
Apara	Lower.
Apara Brahman	Lower concept of Brahman.
Apara Vidya	Lower knowledge.
Aparokshanubhuti	Experience not from senses.
Apurva Karma	An act or rite not born of instinct but prescribed by Veda.
Arjuna	The middle one of the five Pandavas.
Arthavada	The glorificatory passages in the Vedas.
Aryans	The forefathers of the Hindus, especially in North India.
Arya Samajists	The followers of Swami Dayananda Saraswati of recent times.
Asram	Hermitage.
Aswamedha Vidya	Meditation on Horse-sacrifice as prescribed in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad opening portion.
Aswamedha Yajna	The Horse-sacrifice.
Atharva Veda	The fourth Veda.
Atindriya Vishaya	An object beyond sense perception.
Atma Guna	The attributes of the Self.
Atman	Self.
Atma Vidya	Meditation on Self.
Avidya	Ignorance; nescience.
Bhairava	An important attendant of Lord Siva.
Bhakta	Devotee; one who follows the path of Bhakti.
Bhakti	Love of God; single-minded devotion to God.

Bharata Varsha	India.
Bhava	Becoming, existence, attitude of Bhakta towards the deity; emotion.
Bhoga	Enjoyment.
Brahma	God in his aspect as Creator.
Brahmacharin	One belonging to the first Ashrama; student devoted to the study of the Vedas and the practice of spiritual discipline; a celibate belonging to the first stage of life.
Brahmajnana	Realisation of Brahman or Self.
Brahma Loka	The highest of the heavens.
Brahman	The Absolute Supreme Reality of Vedanta Philosophy.
Brahmana	The first of the four Varnas (castes).
Brahma Sutra	The Vedanta Sutra of Badarayana for which Sankara has written a famous commentary.
Brahmatma Bhava	The state in which the Self attains identity with Brahman.
Brahma Vidya	The meditation to attain one's real Self.
Brihadaranyaka	One of the 10 important Upanishads.
Buddha	The founder of Buddhism; considered heterodox and out of Hindu fold for condemning castes and rituals.
Buddhi	Cognition; intellect.
Chandala	Man of the lowest class.
Chandogya Upanishad	One of the 10 principal Upanishads.
Chaturmasya	Name of a rite.
Chit	Consciousness.

Chittaikagrya	Concentration or one-pointedness of the mind.
Chitta Suddhi	Purity of mind.
Crypto Buddhist	A concealed or disguised Buddhist.
Dakshinamurty Stotra	A philosophical poem of Sri Sankara in praise of the god supposed to sit facing the south.
Dama	Restraint.
Darsanas	Systems of Hindu philosophy.
Devaloka	The Abode of gods or Devas.
Devas	Minor gods.
Devata	Deity.
Devi	Goddess.
Dharma	A ritual; act of righteousness; quality of a thing.
Dhyana	Meditation.
Drishta	Seen.
Drishta Phala	Result which can be enjoyed in this life itself.
Dvaitin	Dualist; one who regards God as eternally separate from Atman.
Ganapati	According to Hindu mythology, the elephant-like son of God Siva. Prayer to Him overcomes all obstacles.
Gayatri	A sacred verse of the Vedas invoking the Sun God to guide our intelligence; it is a part of daily Hindu prayer. The Sun is regarded as a symbol of Brahman.
Gayatri Vidya	Meditation where the idea as elaborated in Gayatri Mantra is kept unbroken in the mind.

Gita	The famous philosophical classic of 700 verses, contained in the Mahabharata. The whole of the spiritual philosophy of the Hindus is briefly given here as the instruction of Sri Krishna to Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukshetra.
Gramadan	Gift of all the lands in a village to the common people. See Acharya Vinobaji.
Grihasthasram	Married life as a householder. The second of the four Asramas ending in Sanyasa.
Guna	A rope or strand of a rope; quality; in philosophy and Gita, the three kinds of mental forces that make up the mind.
Gunatita	One who goes beyond the three gunas.
Guru	Preceptor.
Hiranyagarbha	The highest state of embodied life; has other names like Prathamaja (first born) and Prana.
Hridaya	Heart; the inmost core of one's being.
Hridayakasa	The subtle matter in the inmost core.
Indra	The king of the gods.
Iswara	God.
Itihasas	The common name to the Ramayana and Mahabharata, the Great Epics.
Jagat	World.
Jagat Guru	Adi (first) Sankaracharya; A Preceptor for the world.

Jaimini	The expounder of the Karma Kanda of the Veda, by his book Mimamsa Sutra.
Japa Yajna	Repetition of a Mantra, conceived as a sacrifice, offering to God.
Jatakas	Stories relating to the previous births of Buddha.
Jiva	The embodied soul; a living being.
Jnana	Knowledge.
Jnana Kanda	Knowledge section (of the Vedas); the Upanishads.
Jnana Nishtha	The serious mental discipline to gain Self-realisation.
Jnana Paripaka	Ripening in the process of the above discipline.
Jnana Sadhana	Discipline to gain Self-knowledge.
Jnana Yoga	Path of knowledge.
Jnani	One who knows the reality.
Jnapaka	Revelatory; reminding of a thing forgotten.
Kali	The Mother Goddess in Her terrible aspect.
Kaliyuga	Last of the four Yugas or time cycles according to Hindu calculations.
Kama	Desire.
Kamadhenu	The cow that milks all one's desires.
Kamya Karma	Rite to gain a specific object.
Kapila	The sage who is the author of the Sankhya system.
Karaka	Prompting for action.
Karma	Rite; act; the result of all past actions.

Karma Kanda	Ritual section (of the Vedas); the Brahmana portion.
Karma Nishtha	Karma yoga; discipline of detached action.
Karma Paatitva	Low status of a karma.
Karma Yoga	Literally union with God through action, the path by which the aspirant seeks to realise God through activity without attachment.
Karmi	One who swears by karma alone.
Kavi	A poet.
Kedarnath	A sacred place of pilgrimage in the Himalayas.
Kosa Vidya	One of the inferior meditations.
Krama Mukti	Salvation by degrees and not instantaneously in this very life.
Kriya	Action.
Krodha	Anger.
Kshatriya	The second of the four Varnas; a warrior.
Kshetrajna	One who knows the body and the organs, i.e., the soul as the knower.
Loka	World.
Madhu Vidya	One of the lower meditations.
Mahabharata	The great epic regarding the Pandava heroes.
Mahatma	A high-souled person.
Maitreyi	Wife of Yajnavalkya, who wanted to know about Brahman from him.
Manana	Reflection.
Mandukya Karika	The famous commentary on Mandukya Upanishad by Gaudapada, on which Sri Sankara has again commented.

Mandukyopanishad	One of the 10 principal Upanishads, dealing with the four aspects of human consciousness.
Manisha Panchaka	A poem of five verses by Sankara.
Mantra	Word or passage of spiritual power and so used in repetition or Japa.
Maths	Monasteries.
Maya	Ignorance obscuring the vision of God. The cosmic illusion on account of which the one appears as many, the Absolute as relative; it is also used to denote attachment.
Mayavada	The theory of Maya.
Mimamsa	See Jaimini.
Mithya	An illusion.
Mlecha	An unclean foreigner.
Moksha	Release.
Mukti	Liberation from bondage of matter and attachment.
Murty	Form of God.
Nachiketas	The boy hero of Katha Upanishad.
Naimittika	Suitable for special occasions.
Nama	Name (of God).
Nama Japa	Repetition of Nama.
Namboodiri	A Kerala Brahmin with Malayalam as mother tongue.
Navarasas	The nine kinds of human emotions.
Nayyayikas	Those who advocate the school of Nyaya (Hindu logic).
Nididhyasa	Deep contemplation.
Nirguna	Without characteristics.

Nirguna Brahman	Lit. Brahman without attributes; term used to describe the Absolute.
Nirgunopasana	A meditation on Nirguna Brahman.
Nirukta	Vedic Grammar.
Nirvana	Moksha according to Buddhists; freedom.
Nishkama Karma	Action without selfish desire.
Nishtha	Single-minded devotion or love; a complete discipline leading to spiritual liberation.
Nitya	Eternal; obligatory.
Nitya Karma	A rite required to be done daily.
Nivirti	Withdrawal.
Nivirti Karmas	Disciplines that strike off the bond of the mind.
Nivirti Marga	The pathway for release from bondage.
Niyama	Regulation.
Om	The most sacred word and symbol of Brahman.
Omkaropasana	Meditation with the aid of "OM".
Padma Purana	One of the Puranas (books of mythology).
Panchayatana Puja	The worship of five gods instituted by Sankara to purify worship and bring about the idea of unity of God.
Pandit	Scholar.
Para	Supreme.
Parakaya Pravesa	One's mind entering another's body to live there.

Paramahamsa Parivrajaka	The wandering Sanyasin of the highest order.
Parama Purushartha	The supreme end of man.
Paramatman	The Supreme Soul.
Paravidya	Knowledge of the Supreme Being.
Paaraayana	Daily reading as a ritual.
Paripaka	Ripening.
Parvati	Consort of Lord Siva.
Pasubandha	Name of a sacrifice (yaga).
Patanjali	The author of Yogasutra (one of the six systems of philosophy).
Pramana	Means of valid knowledge.
Pramana Vakya	The chief sentence of validity.
Praamaanya	Authoritativeness.
Prana	The life force; also the first-born.
Prasthanatraya	Triple foundation of Vedanta, i.e., the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and Vedanta Sutras.
Prathamaja	The first-born; name given to Hiranyagarbha or Prana.
Pratika	A symbol (to remind us of some important things).
Pratishiddha	Prohibited.
Pratyavaya	Untoward consequences (for not doing one's duty).
Pravirti	Act dictated by natural instincts or desires.
Prayaschitta	An act of atonement or expiation.
Puja	Worship.
Punya	Merit; virtue.
Puranas	Mythology: there are 18 Puranas.
Purusha	Person; soul.
Purushakara	Personal effort.
Purva Mimamsa	See Jaimini.

Rajas	Virility (the second guna according to Sankhya).
Raja Yoga	Yoga based on the principles of psychology expounded by Patanjali.
Ramakrishna Paramahamsa	(1836-1886). Sri Ramakrishna, the Guru of the famous Swami Vivekananda (1863—1902).
Ramana Samaj	A society founded in honour of the famous saint Ramana Maharshi (1877-1950) of Tiruvannamalai, South Arcot Dist., Madras State.
Ramdas Swami	See Anandasram.
Raavana	The demon with 10 heads who stole away Sita, Sri Rama's wife.
Rig Veda	The first and longest of the four Vedas.
Rishi	A Seer of truth; one to whom Vedic Mantras were revealed.
Rishikesh	A place of pilgrimage on the Ganges, at the foot of the Himalayas.
Sabda	Sound; another name for Veda.
Sabda Brahman	Name given to "Om" used in meditation as this sound symbolises Brahman.
Sabda Pramaana	A name for Veda.
Sachidananda	Lit. Existence-knowledge-bliss-absolute; a name of Brahman; Ultimate Reality.
Saadhaka	An aspirant devoted to spiritual discipline.
Saadhana	Spiritual discipline or practice.
Sadyo Mukti	Instantaneous freedom; opposite to Krama Mukti.
Saguna	With characteristics.

Sahaja Samadhi	The higher realisation which never deserts the yogi after attainment.
Sakti	Power, generally creative power of Brahman; a name of the Divine Mother.
Saligrama	The black sacred stone used as the symbol of Vishnu.
Sama	Control of the wandering mind.
Saama Veda	The third Veda the verses from which are sung at sacrifices.
Samhita	The first portion, consisting of verses, of each of the Vedas.
Samsaara	The world; the round of births and deaths.
Samskara	The accumulated past impressions on the mind.
Samyak Darsana	Correct understanding or viewpoint.
Sandhya	Junction (of day and night or night and day); morning and evening prayers.
Sandhyopasana	Meditation of the Supreme at dawn and dusk with the Gayatri Mantra, the Pratika of Brahman.
Sangha	Organisation.
Sankara Bhashya	Commentary written by Sankara.
Sankara Math	A monastery founded by Sankara.
Sankhya Darsana	See Kapila.
Sanskrit	The pure and sacred language of India, of the Vedas and other sacred literature.
Sanyas	Renunciation.
Sanyasin	One who has renounced rituals and the world of relations; a man in the fourth order in a man's life.

Sarvatmabhava	The state of becoming identified with all.
Sastras	Scriptures.
Satasloki	One of the short poems of Sankara containing 100 verses.
Satva	Purity (the first guna of Sankhya).
Shad Darsana	The six systems of philosophy.
Siddha	Lit. perfect or boiled; perfected soul; boiled thing.
Siddhanta	The established conclusion; well-established tenets.
Siddha Purusha	A man who has attained the Self or God.
Siddhi	Perfection in spiritual attainments; miraculous powers.
Siva	The good God; the destroyer God, Sanyasi God.
Siva Puja	The daily worship of Siva and other four Gods instituted by Sankara.
Sloka	Verse.
Smarta	One who follows the old smritis; a follower of Sankara who did not set up a new school, unlike Ramanuja and Madhva.
Smriti	Secondary scripture; memory.
Soma Yaga	A sacrifice with the natural soma juice; soma is a creeper.
Soundarya Lahari	Hymn of Sankara in praise of Mother Goddess.
Sravana	Hearing of the Sastras (scriptures) repeatedly.
Sruti	Fundamental scripture; the Vedas.
Sthita Prajna	A man whose mind is unshakably established in Wisdom.

Stotras	Verses in praise of God.
Sudras	The fourth Varna (caste).
Suguna Vidya	A meditation on any image in the mind.
Sureshwaracharya	The Sanyasin name of Mandana Misra, one of the four disciples of Sankara.
Sutra	A short and aphoristic statement.
Swabhava	One's nature formed on past impressions on the mind.
Swadharma	A duty or activity in conformity with one's own nature.
Swarga	Heaven.
Tamas	Dullness (the third guna of Sankhya); darkness.
Tamoguna	The lowest of the three gunas, characterised by indifference and lassitude.
Tantra	A system of religious philosophy in which the Divine Mother or Power is the Ultimate Reality; scripture dealing with this philosophy.
Totapuri	The guru of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.
Turiya	Lit. the fourth; Transcendental Brahman; state that transcends the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep; the state of consciousness in which Samadhi is experienced.
Upadhis	Limitations, accessories.

Upanishad	The part of the Vedas dealing with the highest philosophical speculations and intuitional knowledge of reality.
Upasaka	One who practises meditation.
Upasana	Worship, any system of regular religious or devotional observance.
Upasya	Fit for meditation.
Vairagya	Indifference to worldly pleasures and relations; absence of passion.
Vaikuntha	The abode of Vishnu according to mythology.
Vaiseshika	One of the six systems of philosophy closely allied to Nyaya (logic).
Vaishnava	Lit. follower of Vishnu: devotee of Vishnu and who excludes Siva.
Vaisyas	The third Varna (caste).
Vakyasesha	A subsidiary sentence.
Vamadeva	A sage mentioned in the Brihadaranyaka as a Brahmadrashta.
Varnas	Colours; the name given in the Vedas to the four castes.
Varnasrama	The four castes and their four stages.
Varnasrama Karmas	Activities of castes and stages in a Hindu's life.
Vasana	Smell; the smell of the mind, the quality of the mind due to its old associations; tendency.
Vasananaasa	Destruction of the passions of the mind.
Vashad	A sound made when offerings are made in fire.

Vastu Tantra	Dependent on the Nature of the object being scrutinised.
Vayu	Air.
Veda Bhashyas	Commentaries on the Vedas.
Vedangas	The six well-known subsidiary aids to the study of the Vedas.
Vedanta	One of the six systems of Hindu philosophy based on the Vedas and Upanishads.
Vedas	The most sacred scriptures of the Hindus being the oldest in the world.
Vidhis	Injunctions.
Vidhi Vakyas	Sentences of command.
Vidya	Meditations; knowledge.
Vijnana	Concrete knowledge.
Virat	The Universe.
Virochana	The king of the Asuras.
Vishnu	The second of the Hindu trinity; the Protector.
Vivekachudamani	A long philosophic poem of Sankara.
Vivekananda Swami	(1863-1902). The great disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and founder of the various Ramakrishna Mutts and Asrams.
Vritti	Wave (of the mind); reaction.
Vyasa	The author of the Mahabharata.
Vyasa Sutras	Vedanta Sutras.
Yajna	The ritual of sacrifice.
Yajnavalkya	A Rishi in the Brihadaranyakopanishad who expounds Brahman to king Janaka and his own wife Maitreyi.

Yajur Veda	The second of the four Vedas, dealing specially with the various Vedic sacrifices.
Yama	Abstention; controller; God of Death.
Yati	One possessing self-control; Sanyasin; monk.
Yatna	Effort.
Yoga	Union; effort made to unite with God or the Self.
Yogachara	A school of Buddhistic philosophy.
Yoga Darsana	Yoga system of Patanjali, one of the six systems of Philosophy.
Yogis	Those who practise Yoga.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ai.	..	Bhashya to Aitareyopanishad
Brí.	..	Bhashya to Brihadaranyakopanishad
Cha.	..	Bhashya to Chandogyopanishad
G.	..	Gita Bhashya
Ish.	..	Bhashya to Isavasyopanishad
Ka.	..	Bhashya to Kathopanishad
Ke.	..	Bhashya to Kenopanishad
Ke. V	..	Kena Vakya Bhashya
Ma.	..	Bhashya to Mandukyopanishad
Mu.	..	Bhashya to Mundakopanishad
Pr.	..	Bhashya to Prasnopanishad
S. B.	..	Brahma Sutra Bhashya
Tai.	..	Bhashya to Taittiriyopanishad

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